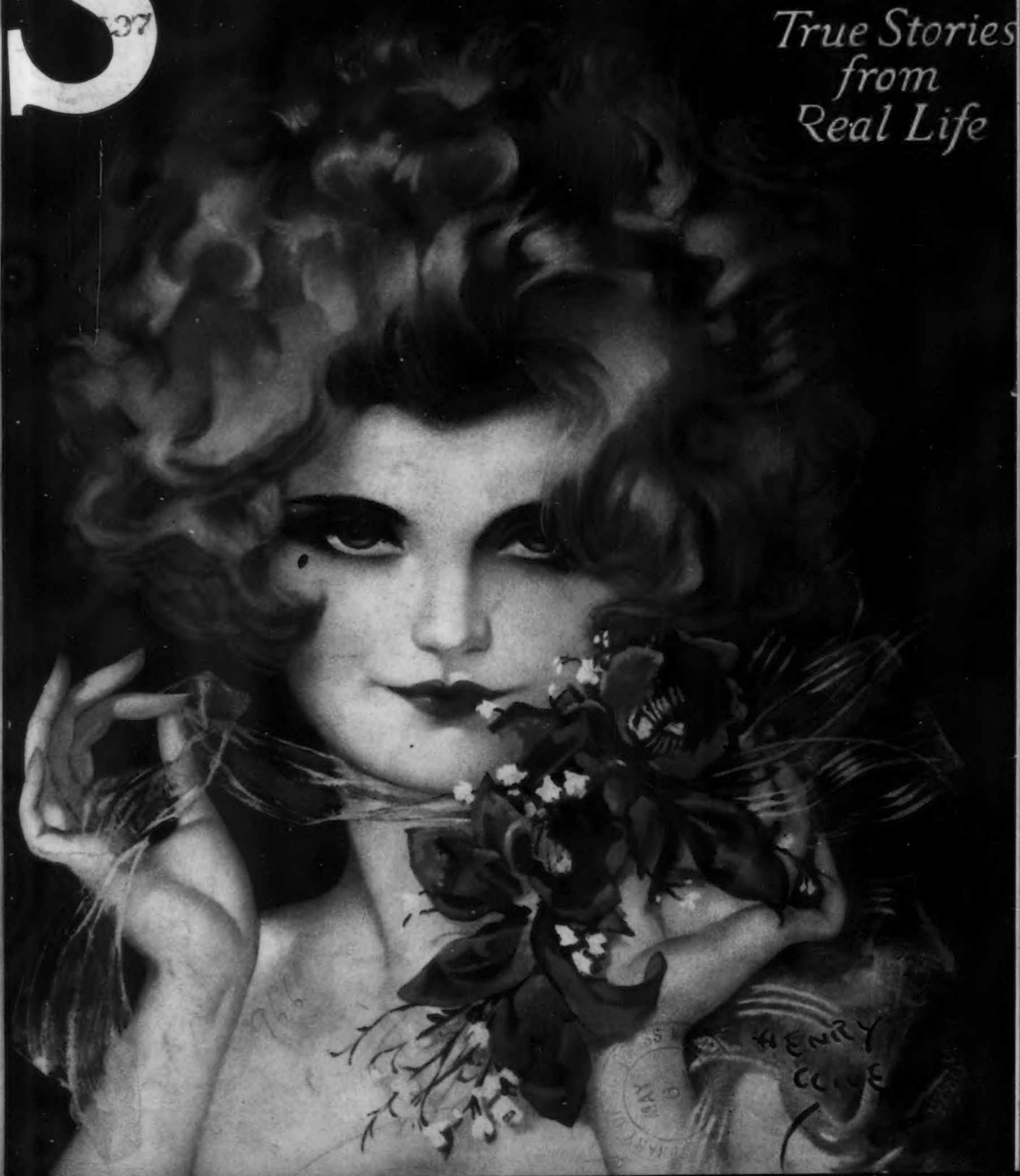


June - 25 Cents

SMART SET

*True Stories
from
Real Life*





Mary Eaton, Famous Stage and Screen Beauty

Maybelline Co., Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen:

Having tried many forms of eyelash beautifiers, I unhesitatingly recommend "Maybelline" as the best. It is harmless, easy to apply, looks natural and its instantaneous beautifying effect is truly remarkable.

Sincerely,

Mary Eaton.

**Liquid Form
(Waterproof)**



MAYBELLINE makes scant eyebrows and lashes appear naturally dark, long and luxurious. Instantly and unfailingly the eyes appear larger, deeper and more brilliant. The improvement will delight you.

Maybelline may now be had in either solid form or waterproof liquid form. Both forms are absolutely harmless, being used regularly by beautiful women in all parts of the world. Either form may be had in Black or Brown. 75c AT YOUR DEALER'S or direct from us, postpaid. Accept only genuine "Maybelline" and your satisfaction is assured.



**Solid
Form**

**MAYBELLINE CO.,
4750-80 Sheridan Rd., Chicago**

Maybelline

The Eyelash Beautifier

The most intimate concern of a woman's life— *should not be shrouded in secrecy*



IGNORANCE of physical facts never brought happiness to any woman.

Wrong information is often worse than no information, and feminine health is too important, too vital a matter to be regarded in a haphazard way. Unless there is frank discussion, there can be no real enlightenment. The modern woman wants to know the truth and then judge for herself. She wants the benefit of every new idea.

Recent advance in practice of feminine hygiene

The recent advances in the practice of feminine hygiene have all come about as an answer to one existing evil. And that is the *evil of poisonous antiseptics*. Every physician and nurse is familiar with the effects when delicate tissues come in contact with bichloride of mercury or the compounds of carbolic acid. Yet until lately there was no other recourse for fastidious women who demanded an efficient cleansing agent—who

demand a true antiseptic insurance against disease germs.

Every woman has reason to welcome Zonite

But fortunately this state of affairs is now a thing of the past. No longer need a woman run the risk of using powerful poisons for the purpose of feminine hygiene. No longer need she fear accidental poisoning in the home—a calamity all too common when the poison bottle is left within reach of little children who can not read the "skull-and-crossbones" warning. No longer need she face any of these dangers, for Zonite has arrived.

Zonite is a powerful antiseptic. In fact, Zonite is a real germicide, for it actually *kills* germs. It doesn't merely *check* germ-growth temporarily like the mild sweet-tasting and bubbling antiseptics. It kills all the germs present and prevents their multiplication. But besides being a powerful antiseptic, Zonite is an antiseptic which, in its many uses, is harmless to human beings.

The most remarkable feature of Zonite is its great germicidal strength. It has more than forty times the strength, for instance, of peroxide of hydrogen, and is far more powerful than any dilution of carbolic acid that can be safely used on the human body.

A WHOLE MEDICINE CHEST IN ITSELF
Zonite kills germs. That is why Zonite is valuable for so many different purposes.
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For a daily mouthwash to guard against pyorrhea and other gum infections.
For cuts, wounds, burns and scratches.
For use as a deodorant. Remember that Zonite, though a very powerful antiseptic, is non-poisonous and absolutely safe to use.

In bottles, 50c and \$1
at drug stores
Slightly higher in Canada

If your druggist cannot supply you, send 50c direct to the Zonite Products Co.

Zonite



No wonder then, that Zonite has been welcomed with satisfaction. A powerful antiseptic that can even be held in the mouth! In fact, dental authorities are recommending it highly for preventive oral hygiene. Suggestion: ask your physician for his opinion of Zonite.

A booklet that every mother will want to give her daughter

The important subject of feminine hygiene is thoroughly covered in a dainty booklet prepared by the Women's Division expressly for the use and convenience of women. The information it contains is concise and to the point. A delicate subject is treated with scientific frankness, as it should be. Send for it. Read it. Pass it on to others who need it. Thousands of women are today running untold risks through the use of poisonous, caustic antiseptics. This book will bring all such women abreast of the times in a very important matter of health and comfort. The booklet is free. It is daintily illustrated and mailed in social correspondence envelope. Use the coupon below.

Zonite Products Company
Postum Building, 250 Park Avenue
New York, N. Y.

In Canada: 165 Dufferin St., Toronto



I should like to have a free copy of the illustrated booklet you have prepared (S-9)

Name.....

Address.....

VOL. 76
NO. 4

SMART SET

JUNE
1925*True Stories from Real Life*

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Although manuscripts and drawings are submitted at the owners' risk, every effort will be made to return those found unavailable

NEXT MONTH



"Oh, I'm sure he's coming back," I said. "We picked out the loveliest French-gray bedroom set today, and Joe said he just loved it."

"But did he PAY for the bedroom set?" demanded Arline.

"I—I don't think so," I replied, "but I know he's coming back."

"Poor little kid," she said.

Read this gripping story of two girls in the July SMART SET.

Published monthly by the Magus Magazine Corporation, at 119 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y., U. S. A.
GEORGE d'UTASSY, President; JOHN BRENNAN, Vice-President; R. E. BERLIN, Treasurer; R. T. MONAGHAN, Secretary.

Vol. 76, No. 4

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Boosts His Salary 125 Per Cent

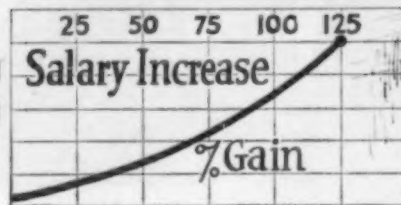


By Substituting an Organized Plan for Haphazard Methods of Acquiring Business Experience



"I say without boasting and simply as a statement of fact, that I have earned more than fifty times the cost of my LaSalle training in special accounting work since taking it up; and in addition, my regular income, or salary, has increased approximately 125 per cent."

E. G. WILHELM,
Pennsylvania.



How You Can Fit Yourself for Bigger Opportunities

Clerk Becomes Auditor; \$25 a Day—
"Seven years ago I worked in a grocery store at \$20 a week. Recently the Hackney Audit Company, of which I am president, was employed by this same grocer under contract to make an audit, at our regular rate of \$25 a day. But for LaSalle training in Higher Accountancy, I would never have been in a position to accept the above contract."

JAMES H. HACKNEY, Florida.

LaSalle Trained Him—Got Him the Job—
"To LaSalle goes the credit for training me so that I was able to turn a refusal into an acceptance, in preference to over one hundred other applicants. I cannot give too much credit to LaSalle and its Placement Department for the success of my application for this very fine position."

E. W. DeMOTTE, New York.

Boosts Salary 400 Per Cent—
"From the bench to the position of Superintendent in Charge of Export, with an increase of 400 per cent in salary—that is what has happened to me within a few short years. In all sincerity, I attribute my success in a very large measure to your splendid course in Business Management."

C. C. MARTIN, Wisconsin.

The brief story of how E. G. Wilhelm more than doubled his income—as summarized in the above paragraph from his letter to LaSalle Extension University—is set forth in print not because it is unusual, but because it fairly represents what any man of average intelligence may expect, within a comparatively few months, if he will follow a well-organized plan of home-study training. Such a "well-organized plan," developed to a high degree of practical effectiveness, finds its best example in the LaSalle Problem Method.

Under this plan a man quickly masters the principles of Higher Accountancy, let us say, during spare hours at home and demonstrates that mastery thru the solution of practical problems lifted bodily from business life. He does not need to know a thing about bookkeeping to start. He is given whatever groundwork or review he may need; then step by step he is given a thorough working knowledge of Auditing, Cost Accounting, Business Law, Organization, Management, Finance, and is thoroughly coached and prepared for his C. P. A. examinations.

Does Accountancy as a profession pay?

"It is probably the best paid profession in the

world," says the Journal of Accountancy, official organ of the American Institute of Accountants. And the experience of LaSalle-trained men tends to corroborate this statement—that of A. V. McDuffie, for example, who started from a \$15-a-week job as bookkeeper and in less than seven years became head of his own firm of public accountants, with twenty-seven men in his employ and an income better than \$20,000 a year. The story of McDuffie's success—as told in his own detailed letter—and that of scores of other LaSalle-trained accountants—will be gladly sent to any man requesting information regarding the actual opportunities in Accountancy.

All this information, together with a clear outline of the steps by which a man may quickly fit himself to take advantage of such opportunities, is clearly set forth in LaSalle's 64-page book, "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays." To the man eager to advance to a commanding executive position—even though he may not plan to make Accountancy his life profession—this book will prove of the utmost value, presenting as it does a complete analysis of Accountancy in its relation to the entire structure of business. The coupon will bring you a copy, without the slightest obligation.

Is it worth 2 cents and 2 minutes of your time to obtain a clear picture of what might be ahead of you in this fascinating branch of business?—Your start toward greater earnings, real success, is as near you as the point of your pencil. For the sake of a brighter future—ACT!

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The World's Largest Business Training Institution

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Dept. 650-HR

CHICAGO

I would welcome an outline of your salary-doubling plan, together with a copy of "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays," also copy of "Ten Years' Promotion in One," all without obligation.

☐ **Higher Accountancy:** Leading to position as Auditor, Comptroller, Certified Public Accountant, Cost Accountant, etc.

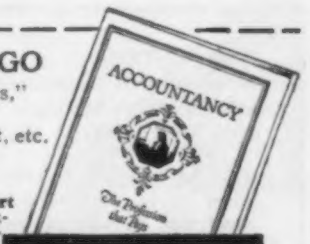
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- ☐ **Traffic Management—Foreign and Domestic:** Training for position as Railroad or Industrial Traffic Manager, Rate Expert, Freight Solicitor, etc.
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- ☐ **Expert Book-keeping:** Training for position as Head Bookkeeper.
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Name _____ Present Position _____ Address _____

"You can order that car now, Jim. I've been turning my spare time into money. Here's the check we need!"



Be Independent of Someone Else's Income— **EARN YOUR OWN!**

Money-Maker's Coupon

Fill in and mail coupon today for details of our easy money-making plan



Dept. SS-T625,
International Magazine Co., Inc.
119 West 40th Street,
New York, N. Y.

YES, I would like to earn some extra money in my spare time. Without obligation to me, please send the details of your money-making plan.

Name

Street and Number

City State

THE time seems to have passed when one person's income is sufficient for the needs of a family. Let us tell you of our plan that enables thousands of men and women to turn their spare time into cash—without experience, without capital, without interfering with their regular duties.

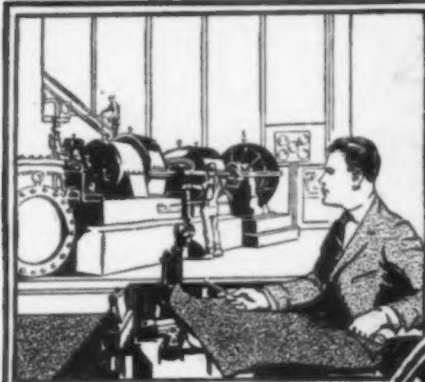
Right now you can think of a score of things for which you would like to have extra money—a home, a car, a European trip, a college education. Will you let us show you how others have obtained them easily.

Mrs. Ray Altschuler, of New York, earned \$600.00 in four months. Mrs. Alice Loomis, in far off Hawaii, virtually paid for her home—by telephone calls. Mrs. Florence M. Caffee, of Wyoming, with three babies to care for, has found time to earn hundreds of dollars in this pleasant way.

International Magazine Co., Inc.

119 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y.

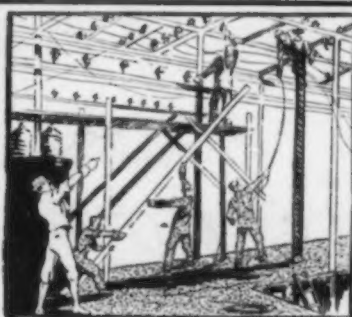
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Be Superintendent of an Electrical POWER PLANT



Own Your Own Electrical REPAIR SHOP



Boss Electrical Construction Jobs



Be an Electrical CONTRACTOR



Chief Engineer Dunlap

"Do you Guarantee me a JOB?"

"Will you guarantee that I will earn more money after I finish Dunlap-training?"

You have a right to ask these questions. When you put your money and time into home-training you are entitled to know what it will do for you. Your whole future success depends on the kind of training you choose now. **I WILL ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS**—straight from the shoulder, in plain English. For the first time a million dollar correspondence school guarantees its training under bond. Coupon below brings this sensational guarantee.

GO INTO ELECTRICITY —the Business of a Million Opportunities

Go to Electrical School AT HOME!

While you're at it, while you're spending your time and money to be a success, *Train* for the big-pay *Boss* jobs in the world's fastest growing industry. The world's work is now being done by Electric power. Autos, ships, buildings, aeroplanes, all electric equipped. Electric lights, everywhere. Think of Radio, Telephones, Telegraph,

Electric railways. This business **DOUBLED** in the last 9 years, and they say it will double again in the next 6 years!

\$60 to \$200 a Week for Electrical Experts

Enormous demand for all-around Electrical Experts as Power Plant Superintendents, Chief Electricians, Foremen of Construction, Electrical Draftsmen, Radio Engineers, etc. And with my training you can go into business for yourself with little capital and make \$3,000 to \$12,000 a year.

4 Electrical Outfits

Given You don't have to leave your home or quit your job, you don't need post-graduate Laboratory courses when you are Dunlap-trained. I send you these 4 costly, complete Electrical Outfits, all the Laboratory and Shop apparatus you need to understand Electrical laws, theories and principles easily and quickly. *Not one penny extra for this equipment.*

Write Me AT ONCE!

The first half of my training is **APPLIED ELECTRICITY**, a complete course. In the second half I give you Electrical Engineering subjects, doubling the quantity of instruction usually included in home-study training. I want to tell you all about this and how I have at the same time made this training **BETTER** in every way. Get my book, it's free. Get my guarantee and special offers **RIGHT NOW**. Coupon brings everything quick!

Earn While You Learn

As early as your eleventh lesson, I give you special training in wiring, Radio, Electrical repairing, motors, etc., so you can go out and start turning your instruction into cash. It's no trick to earn enough in a single evening to pay one month's tuition cost. So you needn't let lack of ready money or anything else keep you from this wonderful home-training.

MAIL COUPON QUICK!

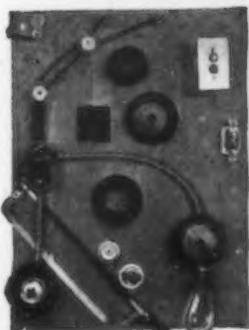
Chief Engineer Dunlap, AMERICAN SCHOOL, Dept. EA 251, Drexel Ave. & 58th St., Chicago.

Rush free book, special offers and your new guarantee. I want complete information on how to become an Electrical Expert at home in spare time.

Name.....

St. No.....

City..... State.....



Wiring Outfit
① Wiring Outfit



Radio Receiving Set
④ Radio Receiving Set

Chief Engineer DUNLAP, Electrical Division

AMERICAN SCHOOL

Dept. EA 251 Drexel Ave. & 58th St., Chicago

Raising the Roof!

HAVE you ever worked your very life-blood away trying to accomplish something worthwhile and suddenly looked up to find those who should be helping standing by with sort of cynical smiles on their faces?

I know you have. And if you were a little girl you ran off in a corner and had a good cry. And if you were a little boy you just put your foot through the thing—and maybe you choked back a sob, too! But if you were old enough to know what it meant you were so mad you either raised the roof or set your teeth and dug in unassisted to accomplish your task.

The greatest successes in the world have been made single-handed. Columbus discovered a new world to the accompaniment of jeering crowds. When Robert Fulton's steamboat stopped out on the Hudson River in its first trip north, the crowds cheered its failure—and then it started again and kept going!

YOU and I have been making a great success of SMART SET. It has grown so fast that it has been copied eagerly. We have been confident of your support because we believe in what we are doing. And all about us have been throngs just hoping we would make a mis-step.

It must be a terrible disappointment to them to see us growing so constantly, developing slowly, steadily into a veritable giant. But faith is a powerful thing, and we believe. We believe in you, and in our mission, and in ourselves.

And because our faith is great we are daring to do new things in a new way. We are daring to set up an ideal and strive toward it. We are

daring to keep our stories clean, because we believe in you. We believe that you would rather read the kind of stories we are printing, and that you will help us by boosting us until we have proved our stand is right.

I THINK our magazine has been improving, don't you? And I'm going to let you in on a secret. Its going to be so much better that there will be no comparison! Perhaps it's just another way of *raising the roof*, I don't know, but we're going to have better pictures and better stories, and better covers, and better everything—or we'll know the reason why.

Somehow I have the feeling that underneath the skin you and I are an awful lot alike. I imagine that we like pretty much the same things, and pretty much the same stories. Now, just for the fun of it, I'm going to pick the things I like best and see if you pick the same things in this issue. Maybe I can find room to tell you how well we agree!

Right now I've got a job on my hands. We've been taking some wonderful pictures and we have some stories that will make you sit up and wonder where the world has been hiding its romance all these years.

AND if it's necessary to set my teeth in order to accomplish the utmost every month, I'll go right on raising the roof until I get such a reputation that people will hate to see me coming.

You pass your copy on to somebody else and tell him what story you liked best, and I'll see that there's one just as good or a little better next time.

Isn't that fair enough?

"Julie's a Wonder!"

By MARJORIE ADAMS

THE town-people see Julie going down the street in a dress that's like burnt maple for color and Fifth Avenue for smartness. "Julie's a wonder!" they say.

Ask her (if you can catch her when those laughing eyes aren't laughing too much) how she's earning enough to dress herself and mother and sister beautifully . . . to take little joy-trips where they've always wanted to go . . . and is having fun doing it! Chances are she'll say, "Oh, I got tired of gingham and serges. Don't you think just getting tired of gingham and serges is enough?"

But later, out comes the pathetic little story of drab dresses that had fairly made her cringe. She wanted bright things, she says. Gold in them, tawny yellow, bluish mists. Not only for herself, but for her mother and her grade-school sister. She had little money; not much notion of styles or right silhouettes. But she earned it, *learned* it in happy night-time hours after working in an office by day.

"How?" you ask, and then she'll say, quite simply, "The Woman's Institute."

THEN perhaps she leads you down a darling hallway to a bright wing of the house, and opens a door. "I want to show you the dresses first." But you scarcely hear her in your amazement. You are staring at a rose silk, looped with cloth of silver; or a gold and orange satin with scalloped flounces and yellow beads; or a dull reddish-violet like crushed grapes, touched with lavender chiffon. And slighter things—demure with lace berthas; a blueness edged with snowy fur; a laciness under a straight black velvet smock. Richness in that simple, clean, gay little room where Julie stands looking at you, laughing!

"I've been making mostly evening things this last year," she explains. "I design them myself."

"But how?" you insist.

Then out rushes the story. "I wanted beautiful dresses—dresses that were more than clothes with price-tags on



them. So I sent a coupon to the Woman's Institute.

"And I'll never forget the night I stood before my mirror and tipped it slowly, slowly, so as to see every inch of the first lovely party dress I'd ever made. Lessons put a kind of spell upon me. I'd work way into the night, stopping only when mother would come, insisting I go to bed, for she would wake and see the light still on.

"YOU know what the Institute does. It starts you making things you want most . . . shows you the loveliest, easiest, quickest way to make them. My new clothes cost less than anything attractive I could get ready-made—much less—and were far more becoming. It was fun making things for mother too. She had never had such good-looking clothes. And the precious things I could produce out of almost nothing for 'Lizabeth! The girls at the office begged me sew for them. The Institute helped in every way; helped me copy high-priced things in windows; taught me to make without bothering about patterns. I turned out dresses so fast I won customers as much by speed as workmanship—Institute methods are surprisingly quick! And the first year's earnings seemed like a fortune.

"I soon saw that I could give up the office work entirely. So I started a shop. The Institute helped with that

too. Oh, they're the loveliest people! They taught me wonderfully of color, style, harmony, little tricks of trimming. I had more orders than I could handle.

"People ask if I'm happy. Do you think they need to ask? I'm doing what I like best to do and getting paid for it. The Institute keeps on giving me the friendliest help. Their magazine, *Fashion Service*, lets me know the coming modes. We have the clothes we want—mother, 'Lizabeth and I. A lot of luxuries we couldn't otherwise afford. And—come meet mother! Then I'll show you the silvery gray coat I've just finished for her, and 'Lizabeth's whole wardrobe."

MANY, many Institute members are "doing what they like best to do and getting paid for it." Some are making dresses for friends just when they want extra money . . . making dresses as attractive as rich ready-mades; at a cost startlingly low. Others, like Julie, have opened costume shops, or are designing.

An attractive 32-page booklet tells how quickly the Woman's Institute can teach you, too, all of costume art. How you can create, with methods so easy you almost marvel at your own skill. You can make an evening gown in an hour . . . a smart sports dress in 57 minutes . . . a becoming housedress in even less time! Just mail this coupon and we'll send you—free—by return mail the full story of what the Woman's Institute can do for you.

WOMAN'S INSTITUTE

Associated with the
International Correspondence Schools

Dept. 6-T, Scranton, Penna.

Please send me, without cost or obligation, a copy of one of your booklets, and tell me how I can learn the subject which I have checked below—


- ☐ Home Dressmaking
- ☐ Professional Dressmaking
- ☐ Millinery
- ☐ Cooking

- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Private Secretary
- ☐ Assistant Bank Cashier
- ☐ Accounting
- ☐ Chemistry
- ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ Business English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ French
- ☐ Salesmanship
- ☐ Better Letters
- ☐ Stenographer and Typist

- ☐ Show Card Lettering
- ☐ Civil Service
- ☐ High School Subjects
- ☐ Illustrating
- ☐ Cartooning
- ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Business Law
- ☐ Corporation Secretary
- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Drafting
- ☐ Designing
- ☐ Telegraphy
- ☐ Window Trimming
- ☐ Railroad Clerk

Name.....
(Please specify whether Mrs. or Miss)

Address.....



She knew why

THE news of Emily's engagement being broken came as a shock to many people.

But not to *this* girl—who had once been engaged to the same man, herself. Everyone expected they would marry. Then, out of a clear sky, the engagement was called off—just as Emily's now was.

She tried to act surprised—but she couldn't be, knowing so well the probable reason.

* * *

You, yourself, rarely know when you have halitosis (unpleasant breath). That's the insidious thing about it. And even your closest friends won't tell you.

Sometimes, of course, halitosis comes from some deep-seated organic disorder that requires professional advice. But usually—and fortunately—halitosis is only a local condition that yields to the regular use of Listerine as a mouth wash and gargle. It is an interesting thing that this well-known antiseptic that has been in use for years for surgical dressings, possesses these unusual properties as a breath deodorant.

Test the remarkable deodorizing effects of Listerine this way: Rub a little onion on your fingers. Then apply Listerine and note how quickly the onion odor disappears.

This safe and long-trusted antiseptic has dozens of different uses; note the little circular that comes with every bottle. Your druggist sells Listerine in the original brown package only—*never in bulk*. There are three sizes: three ounce, seven ounce and fourteen ounce. Buy the large sizes for economy—*Lambert Pharmacal Company, Saint Louis, U. S. A.*

LISTERINE Throat Tablets, are now available. Please do not make the mistake of expecting them to correct bad breath. Rely on the liquid, Listerine. Containing all of the antiseptic essential oils of Listerine, however, they are very valuable as a relief for throat irritations—25 cents.

For
HALITOSIS



Use
LISTERINE

SMART SET

True Stories from Real Life

VOL 76
NO 4

JUNE
1925

Another Unknown Soldier

By HARRY LEE

*It seems so small a thing,
Just to remember;
So small a thing it seems
To be; and yet,
It means so much to us
That you, out yonder,
Do not forget!*

*We, too, have known your world,
The world out yonder,
It was our own, until
The glory fled—
Until it narrowed
To a still white word,
An iron bed.*

*We have a bit of sky
Beyond the window;
We have each other here,
And yet—and yet—
We live upon the thought
That you, out yonder,
Do not forget!*

Are You



*Modern Man
Laughs at
Credulous
Ancients
and Wonders
How They
Could Worship
as They
Did.*

Fooling Yourself?

By DR. FRANK CRANE

THE scarab, a beetle living on sun-bitten hillsides in lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea, was held sacred by the ancient Egyptians.

In the bandages of a mummy a large stone scarab was placed with a chapter from the Book of the Dead engraved upon it.

The belief was that it became identified with the heart of the deceased and so would not betray him in the judgment before Osiris.

The modern man laughs at these credulous ancients, wonders how they could worship a god who could be fooled by such a miserable subterfuge, and realizes that they were deceiving themselves.

The modern man laughs—yet the mind of that same modern man is full of sacred beetles of self-deceit; not so large or striking, but of the same family, nevertheless.

FOOLING yourself is the easiest thing in the world, and a continual struggle goes on in the mind of every man between the truth his hard common sense points out, and the sacred beetles of self-deceit.

The danger of so called "bad habits" is often not so much the habits themselves as the tendency of man first to do them and then bolster them up by kidding himself that they are good for him, or that he is doing them for some reason other than simply because he wants to—a process of substituting sacred beetles for facts.

A man is on solid ground as long as he admits something wrong is wrong. But as soon as he begins to blind himself to facts and tries to ascribe motives other than the true ones, he is nearing the quagmire.

The secret of most failures, moral, mental, physical, as well as business, is

due to a refusal to look unpleasant facts in the face.

It is human nature to look in the looking-glass more frequently when we appear at our best than when we are looking poorly.

So we are more prone to face pleasant facts than unpleasant ones. Yet, it is the unpleasant ones that need most to be faced.

REMEDY your deficiencies, and your merits will take care of themselves," is a motto with a great deal of truth in it.

Face the facts about your health; face the facts about your business; face the facts about your mind; and watch out for sacred beetles when you begin to face unpleasant facts.

Read the newspapers and in almost every column between the lines you can find sacred beetles sticking out—places where someone has been fooling himself.

Running off with your friend's wife is not made all right by claiming to have found "a higher moral law;" it is only kidding yourself.

Because "everyone is doing it" doesn't make it honest for you to be dishonest; if you think it does, you are fooling the one person in the whole world you should never fool—namely, yourself.

Thousands of people who are just plain lazy are kidding themselves that they are not well.

A MAN often continues to fool himself long after he has ceased to fool anyone else.

Look around you and note the way those you come in contact with are deceiving themselves, substituting sacred beetles for facts.

Then look within and start a sacred beetle hunt in your own mind and attitude toward life.



"When I go to
America at Easter-
time, and go to
America to make
our fortune."

Maria's Story

*"What Was It In His Voice? I Knew
Something Had Happened. It Went
Through Me Like a Knife."*

GOING to America!"
It was fifty years ago when I heard those magical words and my young heart started beating so wildly that I could hardly get my breath.

And now when I am an old woman—yes, sixty-six cannot be called exactly middle-age—my heart still thrills as I think of that day when my Silvio came to me and said:

"Maria, we will be married at Easter-time and go to America to make our fortune."

I dropped the lace I was making for my trousseau and fell back in my chair. America!

It had never occurred to me that I could marry anyone except Silvio. Wasn't he the handsomest boy in the small village of northern Italy where we lived? And couldn't he play the violin until you had to dance your legs off? And hadn't our families always talked of the time when Silvio and Maria would go to the church and be married?

Silvio and I had always loved each other; we knew nothing else. As I look back now on my girlhood, it seems that the first stitches I ever took with my needle were on my linen to put away in a chest to keep for the time when Silvio and I would be married.

And yet when Silvio came home from the Conservatory of Milan and said that at Easter-time we would be married, I was so excited that when I finally commenced crocheting again, I had to rip out three rows!

Easter came. Our bans were published, and on that gorgeous day in April when the sun was shining with that peculiar brilliance with which it does only in Italy, Silvio and I were married.

And the wedding dinner and the dancing! How well I remember it all! I can see the whole thing now. I can almost feel the pressure of my dear Silvio's hand on my arms as he leaned over, smiled into my eyes, and called me:

"Signora Guidi."

I dropped my eyes and looked with amazement at the

thick gold band on my wedding-finger; then I straightened up with the dignity becoming a Signora.

Within the week we went to Genoa to take the ship for the wonderful mysterious country where Silvio was to make our fortune.

The professors at the Conservatory all said he was a great artist and that soon they would be proud of their pupil.

All the way in the train I sat with his violin on my lap and it never left me until we were once safely on the ship.

Many friends and relatives came to see us off and wish us Godspeed. I can see the dear old priest who had confirmed us and then later married Silvio and me, as he blessed us on the dock and gave me a holy medal to wear around my neck. That dear little medal is in my jewel box now. How often I have taken it in my hand and how my throat has tightened when I have thought of that day when Silvio and I set sail!

The whistle blew. Everyone hugged me and kissed me. Everyone cried and laughed at the same time. Silvio and I stood by the rail. We waved and waved until we could no longer distinguish our friends on the quay.

SILVIO'S arm was around my shoulder, but I didn't cry. Oh, no! Naturally, I didn't like to leave my home and my family and friends. But wasn't life wonderful—married to Silvio and going to America to make our fortune? What a brave young couple we were, now as I look back! Christopher Columbus, when he set out from that very port of Genoa, had no greater feelings of courage and adventure in his breast than did Silvio and I.

But soon my fortitude and daring were reduced. At the end of twenty-four hours I was huddled up in the corner of the deck with my head on Silvio's strong shoulder. Seasick!

Young as I was, that awful seasickness made me forget everything except my own little quiet room in that village of northern Italy—where the floor didn't move.

There were times when I wished that Columbus never

had discovered America. Why had we come? Why didn't I die?

But that passed. And then what gay times we had! Silvio played his violin every evening for us to dance on the deck. And sometimes he would play beautiful music and make the poor emigrants cry. Then I would nudge him and say:

"Play something lively, Silvio."

How that boy could affect human hearts with his music! I know now it was because of his wonderful heart—that golden heart of Silvio.

During the day we brought our pans of spaghetti up on deck and drank our chianti. Traveling third-class was not the thing it is today. There were not the comforts which the great ocean liners provide for people who can pay just about enough to make the trip.

HOWEVER, we were young, and after that frightful seasickness left me the trip was a pleasure. I helped a woman take care of her baby. What a dear little thing it was! I held it close to me and as it slept peacefully on my breast I looked out to sea and said to myself:

"Some day I will have a baby all of my own—mine and Silvio's."

I can never describe the excitement of sailing up the bay to New York. The noble Statue of Liberty. The World Building with its shining gold dome. How big it looked then! Landing at Castle Garden. The tag fastened on us. Our waiting for Silvio's cousin, Bepi.

"There's Bepi!" shouted Silvio through the crowd.

Such embracing! Such asking of questions! Such laughing and crying again!

Yes, Bepi was playing in an orchestra. Silvio could get a job playing, too.

We drove in a cab to Bepi's house in Mulberry Street. I suppose the people along lower Broadway thought that we were part of a chorus of a comic opera: I, in my peasant costume and shawl; Silvio, in his velvet jacket.

The first thing Bepi did was to take us up on the Bowery and outfit us with American clothes. Bepi's wife insisted on my getting an American corset. She laughed at my figure when I arrived. Silvio had always admired my figure, and so did everyone in the village; but not in New York. We were in America. We must adopt American ways.

Silvio got his job in the orchestra. We moved to rooms of our own. How happy we were! Of course the orchestra was just to get us started. Silvio intended to be a concert player and to give lessons.

Oh, no, my Silvio was too good for merely an orchestra in a theatre. He would at least play in a symphony.

I never look at a group of musicians playing away the same old tunes night after night without thinking of the plans and hopes which burned in each one of those hearts—years ago—and then slowly faded to ashes, as the thought of art fled, banished by the grim business of buying groceries and meat.

I know.

My first baby came, a little boy—Silvio. Our young souls soared to the heavens when we knew we had a son. It was hard to pay the doctor and the nurse and to keep things going through that time. But always Silvio would say:

"Never mind, Maria. As soon as I learn the language I will get pupils. Then all will be well."

To be in a strange country, and hear always a strange language, and try to learn the people's ways, and adopt that country for your own—oh, all this is so hard.

Sometimes when I was singing the baby to sleep, when Silvio had gone to the theatre, I would grow very homesick, thinking of our dear little village across the ocean.

But then I would look at the baby Silvio, brush back his soft dark curls—just the same head as Silvio's—and I would be happy again. I would lie down on the bed and wait for Silvio to come in, then give him his bread and cheese and chianti.

"You look tired tonight, Silvio," I said one evening.

"Yes," replied my young husband, "I seem to get headaches and I'm tired all the time."

"Perhaps it is your eyes," I suggested; "always playing in that gaslight."

"Perhaps you're right, Maria mia," answered Silvio, reaching for my hand.

"Tomorrow you must go to the doctor and get glasses, Silvio," I suggested.

"Better to try to get pupils, Maria," he answered nervously.

Silvio was not himself. Was it the late hours and the constant pressure? What was it? I felt there was something wrong.

If we could only move uptown and get out of that awful noise! But this was impossible. Another baby was on the way. And now our life, like so many others, was simply a struggle for existence. The only pleasure we had were the few moments when Silvio came home from the theatre and we sat holding each other's hands and trying to forget the awful fear which was hovering over us. Silvio was a sick man.

The baby came—a darling little girl. It was a frightful responsibility to have another

child. But that little girl baby—little Maria! Silvio and I had often talked—even in the happy days back in our homeland—of the little Silvio and the little Maria. And now we had them.

Sometimes it was almost impossible for Silvio to go to the theatre at night. He was so weak; he was dizzy; his eyes hurt him.

"Tonight I could hardly read the notes," said Silvio, coming in one evening and laying his head in my lap. "I don't know what it is. Sometimes the notes dance in front of me. Sometimes there are different colors around the score. Often when I look at the conductor's baton, it shines like colored lightning and hurts my eyes until I could scream."

YOU'LL be all right, Silvio. Perhaps in the summer you can get a few weeks vacation. Then you could go away."

"And leave you and the children, Maria! Maria mia, you work far harder than I do and you never complain. Look how you work and sew and take care of the babies and wash and iron and never get a good night's sleep with the babies awake."

"Oh, but I am strong, Silvio. I can stand it. You must do what I say. In the summer you go away."

We had been married nearly three years by now. I was nineteen. My spirit was not entirely gone, but it was

"All that night he clung to me like a frightened child. I prayed to God that in the morning his eyes would be all right—but there was no morning for Silvio."

weakening. My hopes of Silvio's career were fading away.

I thought I could never smile again when Silvio came home one night and said:

"I was paid off tonight. I can't read the notes. They are putting on a new production. I've only lasted the last few months because I could play the score from memory."

I had just realized that once again I was to be a mother.

Don't think it was because I didn't want these babies.

I loved them, and if circumstances had been different I would have welcomed eight. But the agony of not knowing that there would be enough money to pay the doctor, to buy milk for the others—simply to live—was terrible. The awful uncertainty of it all, and my Silvio growing more and more nervous every day, was painful. His beautiful strong white hands, those dear hands which were going to make our fortune, the real hands of an artist, were growing thinner and thinner. The blue veins shone through them. His collar stood away from his neck. His clothes hung on him.

I did not know it then—neither did the doctor to whom he went several times—but my poor Silvio had diabetes.

I could not tell him about this third child. Silvio never knew we had another daughter.

Each day Silvio went out trying to get some kind of work. Each night he came home exhausted. Our little savings were going—little by little. No more chianti; no more tasty salads like we used to have in the old country; no more meat to put in the sauce for the spaghetti. We were living on potatoes, and that was all.

Thank God, the sturdy peasant blood which was in our children's veins kept them going. They were strong little children. That was the great thing; they didn't get sick.

Between times I was able to make a little money. I had always been clever with my hands. And a woman who lived in the same tenement taught me to make artificial flowers.

Far into the night I worked and in every spare moment of the day. But those moments were few.

I was in the kitchen trying to make our poor miserable dish of boiled potatoes look different from the meal before, when Silvio called:

"Maria!"

What was it in his voice? I knew something had happened. It went through me like a knife. I knew before I dropped the pan and rushed into our living-room that a tragedy had occurred. Never, never in all my life shall I forget that one terrible "Maria!"

There he was—my Silvio—standing in the middle of the room. The light was burning right into his dear eyes. His hands were reaching

towards me, helplessly. His mouth formed these words:

"I am in the dark."

"Dark, Silvio!" I gasped. "Why, dear, the light is burning."

"I can't see it, Maria."

"Silvio, Silvio, what do you mean?"

"There is no more light for me. I am in the dark."

Silvio had gone blind. I know now that it was a hemorrhage of the retina of both eyes, the final blow of that most insidious of all diseases— [Turn to page 78]

"Play something lively, Silvio."



*There Before Me Were
Twelve Men Staring
Straight Ahead.
Slowly the Judge
Turned Toward
Them. "Guilty or
Not Guilty?" He
Asked. Suddenly
I Became Faint as*



I Faced Them

GUILTY, or not guilty!" The four words seemed to pound on my brain, excluding all else. I watched the faces of the twelve men who were to decide my fate, my eyes going from one to the other.

They had deliberated an hour and a half. Now they had filed back in and were seated again. I would know in a few moments. Often, I had been told I was pretty. I was only seventeen. Something, I know not what, told me that these two facts were all that stood between me and prison—my youth and my beauty.

They were the only weapons left me in my misfortune. But they had been given to me. And I had used them. I knew my smile was attractive. I had smiled at the twelve men, at the grave judge, even at the state's attorney, whom I hated. It was all I had to fight with, and I had fought.

I knew my story was, to other people, sordid. I had learned a lot in jail. Things like this had come to many others. Yet, I could not quite comprehend that it had happened to me.

But I realized now I was not thinking clearly; I could not. The swift happenings of the past month had been too much. Everyone had been kind. But I was stunned.

Even then my most distressing thought was that I, in my ignorance, had brought this on my husband and

myself. I had sent my husband to jail, then to prison—my own husband whom I loved more than myself, more than my liberty, more than anything.

I had tried to atone, but it had ended in this. Now, I too, would probably go to prison. If it had not been for my ignorance—or was it my innocence?—we both would probably now be free.

I was not bad; I had been merely foolish. Yet, I had sat for almost an hour directly across the table from the state's attorney and heard him scream to the jury that I was a shameless woman of the streets; that I was an enemy of society, too dangerous to be free. I, who had done what I had done, because I loved my husband, and him only!

PERHAPS I never would have married him if I had known he was a thief. Yet, I believe I would have. There was no limit to my love for him, else I would not have been here now.

I could see the judge's head as he sat on the bench, above me. He was rustling papers and talked in a low tone to an attorney. He did not even seem to be interested in this that meant so much to me.

He had probably seen many more like me, who had come from the country to the city to seek they knew not



ALL ALONE

what, and found *this*. But few, I believed, had been charged with such a serious offense as I had been. I was charged with conspiracy to bring about a jail delivery. That was as near as I understood it. I had been told by my attorney that in this state—Kansas—the penalty might be ten years in prison. And I was only seventeen!

I had been raised on a farm. It was not far from the city in which I was now graded as a dangerous criminal, but, like many other girls I had seen in the city, the ways of the farm and my parents' views had seemed to me old-fashioned. To me it had grown to seem worse than life in a prison.

Remorse gripped me as I thought of the times my poor mother and I had clashed over my ambitions, which she thought of as waywardness. I could see, now, that many things I had said to her were cruel and wrong. Had she, or father, forgiven me? The answer seemed to be in the fact that they had not come to the trial; had never communicated with me since my arrest. I had fought it out alone, and I must continue.

Roy could not help me. He had already been sentenced to ten years in the state penitentiary. Although I did not know it, he had been arrested after he had passed a thousand dollars worth of automobile tires to a confederate, who waited outside with a motor truck.

He had told me he was a tire dealer, and I had believed. I would have believed anything from him. He was so different, so advanced, it had seemed, over Ted Waldron, who lived on the farm next ours. It was Ted my parents wished me to marry. But to me, who had known him all my life, he seemed a mere boy.

I met Roy soon after I came to the city to study in a business college. His clothes were so different; his manners were so different. He seemed capable of accomplishing anything, in my eyes.

I HAD known him only a month when we were married. Then, I thought I had found what I wanted. A year passed almost before I knew it. Before that, I had been sick of life; sick of the lonely evenings; sick of being where nothing happened.

Roy seemed different from any other man I had ever known. He was always immaculately dressed, plentifully supplied with money. Even when the year had almost passed he still seemed like a dream-man to me.

His ardor, which had carried me away before we were married, never varied. He was always kind. We lived in an apartment in a style more elaborate than anything I had ever been used to. He was with me almost constantly except sometimes for part of the night, which he

explained by telling me he carried on most of his business at night.

My heart had sunk when I was on the stand and had told the jury I had believed him. They had probably heard and read so many stories just like that before. But I could only tell the truth.

One day Roy had told me we were going to move to cheaper quarters. Things hadn't been going well, he said, and he was short of money. Later, I remembered, he had been a little different sometimes of late. But he had always been kind to me except once or twice when I found little bottles of white powder in his pockets. He had snatched them away from me, telling me to keep hands off his medicine. I know now what that white powder was; I didn't then.

The place we moved to was pitiful as compared to where we had lived. It was only one room and a small kitchen we had to use with another couple living in another room. But even there I had been happy—with Roy.

Often, at night, he brought new tires home. He would

usually take them out again in a day or two. He always told me they were tires he had bought to sell at a profit.

The night finally came when he did not come back. I knew a few of his friends and went to them the next morning, but they had not seen him, they said.

I do not know if I had a premonition, but I was terribly worried. On the night before, he had come in with six tires. He had put them under the bed, he said, to "get them out of the way." They were still there.

IT WAS nearly noon when a knock sent me to the door. Three men stood there. I had never seen them before. But I knew before they spoke they had come to tell me something about Roy.

"We're tire dealers," one of the men said. "We met Roy down the street. He said we would find some tires here that we want to buy. He said you would show them to us."

I remembered the six tires. I was overjoyed to learn Roy was safe. I was glad to show them the tires under the bed. They pulled them out and tore off the wrappers of two.

"We're right," one of the men said. "They're my tires."

I was amazed, but still did not understand. Yet, a mysterious fear had come over me.

"Where is Roy?" I asked.

The men all turned to me.

"Try and not worry, little girl," said one of them. "Your husband is safe.

I give you my word for it. When did Roy bring in these tires?"

"Night before last."

"At what time?"

"About half-past one."

"He often brought tires home at night, didn't he?"

"Yes," I said. "Often."

Then, when it was too late, I refused to say anything more. My fear was still vague; I did not know what had happened, but I seemed to *feel* it. Yet, I was too stunned to realize what it meant. But what I did know instantly was that I had said more than I should have. I would gladly have been born dumb rather than have said it



... ten years in prison. And I was only seventeen!



One thought stood out above all others: I had done my best to atone to Roy, but had failed.

I believe I swayed a little, for one of the men gently took my arm and helped me to a chair.

Then, without another word to me, they took the tires and left. I shall never forget the next few hours. I do not know exactly what happened, except that I must have cried aloud, because the woman from the next apartment came in and tried to comfort me.

THAT afternoon I went to the jail and saw him. I confessed what I had told the officers, but he did not come forth with one word of blame. On the other hand, he seemed to regret it only for my sake. He even confessed that for two years he had been stealing tires. As he talked I noticed a queer light in his eyes. I wondered how he could be so cheerful in the face of what had happened.

But I still loved him. I was determined to get him out, somehow. I tried to get bail for him. It was set at five thousand dollars. I could not get it. They told me he was a dope-fiend and not a good risk.

Even at my age I have come to believe that only a woman knows love for the terrible thing it can become; the spur that will drive one to anything. What I had learned about Roy had not killed it. Instead, it had changed it into a determination to save him; to place it, somehow, between him and destruction.

I did not sleep that night. All night long I was slowly

forming a plan to save him. I know now that it was foolish, but to me then it seemed the only way. The worst that could happen if I failed was my own arrest. I actually looked forward to that. For a time, at least, it would put me under the same roof he lived under.

It was still early the next day when I went out. I had not gone far when I met Ted Waldron. I did not see him at first or I would have tried to avoid him. A car drove up to the curb and stopped. It was he. He had always treated me with the greatest respect. He did now, too, but I was furious at his seeing me then.

"I have looked for you for two days," he said, cheerfully, though his eyes told of worry. "Will you give him up now? I love you."

"Get away and don't dare come near me again," I hissed at him.

I WILL never forget the expression that came upon his face. I thought at first he might sob, there on the street. He turned away, his face red and ashamed. His eyes were like those of a faithful dog that had been struck. But I had no pity for him then. I did not see him again.

I went first to Dave Kimball's garage. I knew that Dave had been buying tires from Roy. I knew now that he knew they were stolen tires. And I was determined he would have to help with my plan for Roy's liberty.

He seemed surprised to see me and said that the gang would soon have Roy out, but I had no confidence in the gang. I made Dave get me a dozen hack-saws and promise me that I could have a motor car with a driver at any time I needed it. He seemed to think it was all right to try to help Roy escape, and said if we made a get-away to go to Chicago and stay under cover.

After getting the hack-saws I spent almost my last cent for a basket. I then had all I needed to buy. I spent another sleepless night.

THE next day was Sunday. I believe I was more lonely in that little bare room when daylight came than I had been during the long hours of the night.

Later in the day I cooked a good dinner. I cooked just the same as I would have if Roy had been there. I made biscuits, which I knew he liked. Before I put them in the oven I cut one in half, slipped a note in it, and baked it.

The note was read by the state's attorney while I was on the stand. I can now see it on the judge's desk. I remember it word for word. It said:

Dear Lover:

I love you more than anything else in the world. There are twelve hack-saws twined in the network of this basket. There is soap, the same color as the bars, here too. I will come and see you tomorrow afternoon and then you can let me know when you can get out and I will have a car two blocks north of the jail. Chew this note up and swallow it and for God's sake, honey, be careful.

Gertrude.

I saw the twelve men staring at me now and then as the state's attorney read that note. I thought I saw pity in some of their eyes. But now they all seem merely grave.

I filled the basket with the dinner I had cooked, the biscuits on top, covered with a white napkin, and took it to the jail. I did not falter as I entered, but I believe my face got pale when I handed the basket to the jailer and told him it was a dinner for Roy. It seemed to me, although I tried to smile, that the blood ran from my face. At least, the jailer looked at me for a little while.

It would not have surprised me if my heart had bounded out of my bosom when I saw him set down the basket and pull the napkin off. The suspense was terrible as I saw his hand running over the biscuits. He picked one up. It did not seem possible that he would pick out *that* biscuit from all the rest.

He opened it. It broke easily. I do not remember what my thoughts were when I saw a folded paper drop from it to the floor. I think I laughed. I did not

seem to realize the seriousness of it at the moment.

One thought stood out above all others: I had done my best to atone to Roy, but had failed.

The jailer had already pulled the big automatic lock that opened the steel door, but he closed it before reading the note. I think, if I had not looked forward to being confined under the same roof with Roy I would have tried to run through the door while the jailer read that note. I really think he was sorry for me. He said nothing as he took me by the arm and led me before the sheriff.

Then had come weeks in the jail with other unfortunate women and girls. I had already learned what imprisonment meant during those weeks, with hardly a

sight of Roy, that had led up to this terrible moment of sitting, pale and tense, awaiting the verdict of these twelve men.

Oh, how I wanted to go free now, for I had learned that the only way I could ever hope to help Roy was to be free.

As I ran my eyes from one to the other of those twelve faces, I got the impression they were all, somehow, alike. Each had the same gravity, the same pallor. Their eyes would not meet mine.

I wished there had been at least one woman on that jury. She might have understood. She would have known that the saws I smuggled were not to let all the prisoners out, as the state's attorney had told the jury. She would have known that my only purpose was to get back my husband by the only means my ignorance had suggested.

She would have known that there is no law, made by God or man, that means anything to a woman when it stands between her and the man she loves.

The judge's question suddenly sounded through the courtroom. To me it had an ominous tone, although his face was a mask.

"Gentlemen of the jury," his voice droned. "Have you reached a verdict?"

I felt the blood rushing from my face. I knew I must be pale.

"Yes, your honor."

"You may hand it to the clerk."

THE juryman who had spoken stood up. In his hand was a folded piece of paper. I knew that on that paper was written my fate. I knew that the words on it meant that I either would or would not see Roy for a long time—perhaps never again. I noticed that the juryman's hand trembled slightly as he handed it to the clerk, who was very deliberate. [Turn to page 88]

What Do You Think?

Editor, SMART SET.

Dear Sir:

The case outlined in the story, "Before the Jury," was tried in division number..... of the district court at..... before the Hon..... during the April, 1924, term of said court.

The details of the case are given correctly, as based on testimony given during the trial by which a conviction was secured and the woman is at this time at the State Industrial Farm at.....

Very truly yours,

Clerk of District Court.

Here is a letter which accompanied this story.

Do you think this girl deserves another chance?


If you do, write to us. If we get letters enough we will make a plea to the Governor of this state and ask him to reconsider her case.

Perhaps you and I can do a little missionary work.—THE EDITOR.

Sweethearts in Summer Shows



ETHEL SHUTTLEWORTH
and **LEO ERROL** present one
of the best laughs in
Ziegfeld's newest pro-
duction, "Louis XIV,"
which has been one
the most talked
shows on Broadway
since it opened at the
Cosmopolitan theatre.



*PATTI HARROLD
and HUGH BANKS,
as they appear in "Big Boy,"
Al Jolson's latest produc-
tion, which is off to a good
start, due in part to the
singing of this pair of ideal
lovers.*

ILSE WINKLER and HOWARD MARSH have a wonderful setting in the operetta, "The Student Prince." The Schuberts have accomplished something unusual in this production. The music is delightful both in the scores and in the arrangement of voices—and the comedy is exceedingly clever. It depicts a long record run on Broadway.



*JUVENNE SEGAL and IRVING
FISHER in the newest "Zeigfeld
Follies" sing their way into the hearts of
the audience. The Follies seems to be
not only a hardy perennial, but one
which is improving constantly.*



*A Home Is a Sacred Thing
Which Must Be Loved If
It Is to Succeed—So
Hilda Took On Her
Young Shoulders
the Mighty Bur-
den, and Tried
to Be a
Mother.*

*Anxious hour followed
anxious hour. It was
dawn—the gray dawn
of fatigue; it was night
—night illumined by the
ghastly half-light of the
bedside lamp, and
fraught with the fear
of what its low hours
might bring.*

Her Borrowed Family.

SOMETIMES when my eyes fall on a daintily shod foot protruding from the soft folds of my silken afternoon gown I have the odd sensation that the member isn't mine. Twenty-dollar pumps on feet that tramped the streets of Elmwood in the coarsest of stogies on that hot fall day that marked my introduction to the place!

I had come there a green country girl, fresh from a prairie farm in South Dakota, looking for a place where I could work while going to school. I had accompanied a brother and his family west. There were eleven of us children at home—too many for one not over-prosperous

farm to support—and it was up to us older ones to get out and rustle for ourselves. I had always thought I'd like to fit myself for teaching and, having exhausted the educational possibilities of our country school, to come out here with Lars and Katie seemed the right thing to do.

Mrs. Morris always contended that it was some unseen power that led my hesitating footsteps to her door that day instead of one of the dozen or so other places the high school principal had given me as wanting a school girl helper. I always thought so too, seeing how pleasantly our ways fell in together.

I know I had half turned in the Dorchester place which came first on my list, when its fearful stillness and order struck a chill to my heart, and hearing children's voices down the street I felt something fairly pulling me on toward the big littered yard where a half dozen youngsters were having a high time turning the hose on each other.

Well, it was a fine place I fell into. Of course, with new babies coming along, and the family in quarantine half the time for this or that, I lost a good deal of time from my studies, which would cause me to drop behind first one class and then another. And how that worried Mrs. Morris! I used to try to make her see that what I lost in school was more than made up to me by the refining influence of a home like this. She and Mr. Morris took such a friendly interest in my efforts at improvement helping me with my studies, giving me access to their fine library, directing my reading. And when anything especially good came to the city, such as a worthwhile lecture or Shakespearian play, they always wanted me to attend, Mr. Morris insisting on paying for my ticket—though, dear knows, money wasn't any too plentiful with them those days with his business just getting started.

BUT there was a personal side to my relationship with the Morrises that made the modest wages they were able to give me at that time a princely amount, and the work I did there a labor of love. And when I think that I had been with them since before David and Jeanie were born and that Margaret was only six and Roger four when I came, I understand just how much like homefolks they were to me and how I worshiped those children.

"Just the same," Mrs. Morris used to say, "when you get in normal school next year, there are to be no interruptions to your school work, no matter what happens to the house of Morris—fire, flood, pestilence, sickness or sudden death!"

The family thought that David was my favorite of the four children; but that wasn't true. I loved them all equally. If I seemed to favor David more than the others, it was because he was such a delicate, shy, sensitive little fellow—more of a baby at five years than Jeanie at two. Jeanie was always a regular little rough-neck, the darling; but Davie was the kind the world would be always bruising.

MRS. MORRIS uttered that brave resolution to allow no further interruptions to my school work at the very time that a terrible malady was fastening upon her, which was to take her from us and end my school days forever.

We had known ever since the operation that her condition was hopeless and that it was just a matter of time with her; but Mr. Morris hadn't wanted *her* to know. I used to wonder how he thought it possible for her not to guess the truth when it showed so plainly in his haggard face. But Mrs. Morris carried on the brave deception so gamely that even I couldn't be sure whether she knew until

late one evening. She sent for me to talk things over.

"Hilda—dear Hilda," she said, reaching for my hand and giving me a look that I shall treasure to my dying day. "I have sent for you because I must talk to someone, and you've been my right-hand man in so many crises. I can't talk to Mr. Morris. He'd just go to pieces, poor dear, and there are things I must get settled before I go. I have a feeling that the time is growing short."

"Don't cry, dear," she said, seeing the sudden tears that I could not hold back, spring to my eyes. "It's



David always loved pretty things. I can see him yet, standing off eyeing the soft folds of her dress, yet hardly daring to.

a strange thing, but there seems to come at the end this way a sort of indifference—an impersonal feeling about going. You grow so weary." She seemed to drift off into reflection, then rouse to go on. "If it were not for the children—Fred and the children—I wouldn't mind going. I'm so tired—so tired. But, Hilda, what's to become of them with only their father? Men are so helpless, and Mr. Morris could never stand the double strain of a

family and business on his hands; he's not strong, you know. Who'll keep things going here for him so he can carry on and see them through? Who'll look after my babies—sensitive little David who'll always need so much encouraging; Margaret with her warm nature, just at the age where the wrong handling might wreck her whole life; irresponsible, reckless, darling old Roger; and Baby? Oh, Hilda, what's to become of them?"

There was something heart-rending in the appeal of those eyes as they searched my face. It was plain that she was looking to me in her extremity for a solution, yet it hadn't occurred to her, I know, that I might give up my schooling to see her family through. She would consider that expecting too much. The most that she was counting on from me was that I'd stay on a while as now, giving them part time until my training was finished—that little family that needed a mother on the job all the time! And when I had completed my course, what then!

I was glad that my facing of the problem through weary, restless nights had given

me something to offer her—something to make her feel better.

"I have been thinking of that, too," I told her; it seemed no time to let false delicacy shroud our honest contemplation of the thing that must be uppermost in our thoughts. You should have seen the eager expectancy of her expression at that.

"I was thinking," I went on, "that that little old lady who visited us last winter—Mr. Morris' great-aunt—we might get her. She told me that she hated staying at boarding houses as she has to now, not being needed anywhere."

I could see by the cloud that passed over my mistress' face that she was disappointed that I had nothing better to offer. But I hastened to explain that I meant that Mrs. Partlow was to come simply as the nominal head of things; to give me the benefit of her experience.

BUT Mrs. Morris could not bring herself to accept that sacrifice on my part right at first—not until I'd pointed out that loving the children as I did I could no more abandon them in their hour of need than she could; that I'd about come to the conclusion that the teaching profession was an overcrowded one, anyway, and not so remunerative, either, when you came right down to it, as domestic service. "Later on when things adjust themselves," I said, "if I want to go on with my training, I can. I have my high school education now; there's no hurry about the other."

And so it came about that upon the death of dear little Mrs. Morris I took my place as mother of her brood and tried to so fill that place that however else I failed to measure up to the one who had vacated it, her children should at least never want for devoted care, and genuine mother-love.

It had been Mrs. Morris' idea that since I was to take her place as mother of her children that I be accorded the full dignity of the position—be taken fully into the family circle. I think Mr. Morris was glad to have it that way, too, in the desolate days following his wife's death. We seemed such a pitifully shrunken family group somehow with Mrs. Morris gone. We had to huddle together for comfort.

It helped having gentle little Aunt Mattie there. In a way, she was just another child—so frail and dependent—but wise in her counsel. There came a time when, except for a tender yearning for the absent one, we had adjusted ourselves to our loss and were once more a thoroughly happy and contented family with our motor trips and picnics in summer, and pleasant evenings about the fire in winter.

AND then that woman entered the scene to wreck our paradise. Mrs. Sommerville was a friend of Mr. Morris' sister, Fanny. If ever sister and brother were unlike, Fanny Cameron and Fred were that pair. Fanny was so utterly worldly and self-centered; likable, though, at that, with her easy-going good humor.

Mrs. Sommerville had been a friend of theirs from childhood, but she had married young and gone abroad to live. She was back now, with a divorce to her credit, "ghastly broke," and looking for a rich husband. She and Fanny were very chummy—just two giddy girls who tried to be very sophisticated.

"How would Fred do? He's grown disgustingly rich," his sister carelessly suggested.

"Freddie looking around, is he?"

"Not that *he* knows of." Mrs. Cameron answered: "but he ought to marry again. He needs a wife to stir him out of his self-content and show him how to spend his money. Can you imagine anyone with a decent income living in this grubby manner, buried out here in



exquisite caller; wanting to stroke the

the suburbs? I don't see how he can endure it out here."

I was serving them tea out in the pergola at the time and I remember wondering indignantly how anyone could talk so, with spring bursting so heavenly sweet over that lovely lakeside place in the country.

As to the gist of her remarks—the suggestion that Mrs. Sommerville marry Fred—I didn't give it a thought at that time.

One thing: I knew this woman had no use for the children. She wasn't always at pains to hide her feelings

hurtling forward to greet her. To be sure, she was wearing a delicate, silk, sport outfit, which wouldn't have been helped any by the raking of puppy paws, but as Roger pointed out when I tried to soothe his feelings afterward, one sharp tap or two would have stayed Rag's ardor, and she had gone on beating the poor whimpering, cringing little fellow unmercifully until his master rescued him.

There was another incident that rankled in my mind particularly, when shy, sensitive little David had been the victim. He was always slow to make up to people, but, won by Mrs. Sommerville's coaxing when his father was about, he had nerved himself up to the point of approaching the lovely lady who with his Aunt Fanny had motored out to have dinner with us. It was getting to be a pretty regular thing for them to drop out our way around time for Mr. Morris to come home, which of course meant that they would be urged to stay for dinner.

David always loved pretty things. I can see him yet, standing off eyeing the exquisite caller, and wanting to go up and stroke the soft folds of her dress, yet hardly daring to. I was in the flower-garden arranging some flowers in a vase—not paying much attention to what was going on. Soon I noticed that Mrs. Sommerville and Fanny had followed me.

It was her interest in the flowers, I suppose, that gave David the courage to edge forward step by step and finally reach a timid hand to her knee.

Poor little chap! To have her meet his advances in such a heartless way. I suppose she was startled, but even so, there was no excuse for her action. "Mercy! You terrible little boy," she cried,

and then looked up at me. "Don't you know better than to touch a person with your grubby hands?"

A moment more and I had the terrified child in my arms, soothing his wild sobbing; but oh, the hate in my heart for that creature who could so wound my David.

I began to see by this time, too. [Turn to page 92]



"I've just foolin' when I said you hurt me," he said. "Squeeze me as hard as you want to."

in that respect except when their father was about.

Her introduction to us had given an insight into her real character, which was cold, cruel and ruthless. I regretted that Mr. Morris had not been there to see her in white fury flaying Roger's puppy, when the little dog had broken from the boy's hold that day, and gone



"I'll learn you to hustle when I speak, you lazy good-fer-nothin'!"

To Live in the Country Was

My Chief Desire

*It Was Inevitable That Some Day My
Smoldering Hopes Should Burst Into Flame*

DRAT you, Emily Ann, you imp of Satan! Come out of that bed or I'll skin you alive. It's after six. Git yer breakfast and out with you. You know there ain't a cent in the house."

At the sound of the angry tones I struggled to pull myself from the heap of filthy blankets upon which I had been sleeping. But I did not move sufficiently fast to satisfy the old woman who stood over me. She reached out with her long fingers and pulled me whimpering to my feet

"I'll learn you to hustle when I speak, you lazy good-fer-nothin'!" she shouted. "Now I'll give you five minutes to eat and git out. And if you come back with less than two dollars today—well, you know," and she glanced meaningfully at a strap hanging from a nail beside the door.

Bolting my bowl of porridge, I ran a comb through my hair, pulled closer the ragged frock which I wore sleeping and waking, then hurried from the dilapidated shanty I called home.

A few minutes later, shivering and fully as miserable as the picture I presented, I stood at a corner which many factory workers passed on the way to their labors, begging pennies. "Ma Peggy," so-called, stayed at home and drank gin. I was an orphan—that's all I know.

Such incidents—and worse—with hunger, cold, filth and beatings as my daily portion, constitute my early recollections. I was less than seven then, but they became too deeply impressed upon my memory ever to be forgotten.

One day a policeman came up behind me when I was begging. He said he was going to arrest me, but I cried and begged so hard he finally let go of my arm. However, he made me tell where I lived, all about Ma Peggy and how she beat me if I didn't bring home money. Then I ran all the way to our house, but when I told Ma what had happened to bring me back so early, she was furious.

"So you let the cops ketch you, eh?" she screamed. "Well, I'll learn you to be more careful." She reached for the strap, but I ran crying from the place, right into



"So you let the cops ketch you, eh?"

the arms of the big policeman who had followed me.

That happening brought an end to my life with Ma Peggy. She was sent away—the neighbors said to jail—and I was put in an asylum. There my name was entered as Emily Ann Brown, for they said I must have some last name.

And there everything was completely changed for me. I washed my face and combed my hair as often as I liked. And I had clean frocks of my very own, plenty to eat, a real bed to sleep in, and, best of all, went to lessons regularly. It seemed like a little bit of heaven to me then.

And it was in the asylum that I first learned of the country, the great open places, with trees and grass and flowers on every side, far out beyond the dust and smoke

and grimy buildings of the city. I was told all about that wonderful fairyland by the girls who had lived there before their parents died and they were brought to the home.

And so wonderfully did they describe the country that it became a sort of dream future for me. And I made up my mind that as soon as I had acquired an education and was permitted to leave the asylum, I would go at once to that wonderful land of promise and live there always. I could think of no such misery out among the green fields as that which had been associated with my life in the city.

BUT when, at sixteen; the time arrived for me to leave the home. I failed to make my dream come true. My immediate future was not in my own keeping, I discovered; and I was taken away by a man and a woman living in another part of the city to whom I had been "bound out" as a servant. However, for months I was quite contented there, for both were kind to me and were pleased with my work. But, with the beginning of summer, their son came home from boarding-school, a circumstance which brought me misfortune.

From our first meeting I feared him, for he kept telling me how pretty I was, asking me to kiss him and trying to fondle me. For a time I managed to keep him from me. But one evening, when I was alone in the kitchen, he slipped in without my hearing him, threw his arms about me and forced his lips against mine. In terror I tried to beat him off and screamed. My cries brought his father and mother, who found me struggling to escape his embrace. However, I was permitted no explanation, and he was not man enough to make one. His mother blamed me entirely for the incident and ordered me from the house.

Almost broken-hearted, I was leaving with my scanty belongings when the father stopped me, pressed a fifty-dollar bill into my hand and said: "I am sorry for you, but I cannot interfere. I know enough of my son to realize you were not at fault. But a distorted story will get about here. My advice is to leave this place, go to St. Louis—it isn't far away—and make a new start."

I took his advice and went there, for in such a large city I believed there would be many opportunities. All I desired was work which would permit me to live decently and to avoid further unhappiness. I soon discovered that the jobs for inexperienced girls were limited. But I did

not fear hard work and for months supported myself as a waitress, cashier, and telephone operator. I wanted, nevertheless, to do something different; become an office worker if possible. And it was while casting about for some employment which would enable me to save money that I might study, that I replied to an advertisement for chorus girls needed to fill vacancies in a touring company filling a week's engagement in the city. Although I had seen but few shows and could sing but little, the manager accepted me—because of my good looks and figure, he said.

Behind stage I found the people very kind, and with their assistance I soon learned sufficient of the dances to take my place on the stage. Hard work and close study enabled me to improve constantly. And by the



"Well, we hear things up here. You're not wanted in this neighborhood. Don't come again."

end of the tour, when we were disbanded in New York, I had little difficulty in obtaining another engagement with a show put on for the summer. I would have preferred to join some of my friends and go into the country for a vacation. However, I was quite happy in my work and put off my long awaited venture into the open spaces that I might save more money toward a business course I intended to begin in the fall.

THEN a new interest—a sweetheart—came into my life. His name was George Gale. Good-looking and dashing, he fairly swept me from my feet by the ardor of his wooing, and within two months I had left the stage and we were married and living in pleasant rooms in a little hotel on the edge of the theatrical district. I never knew the exact nature of my husband's business. He said he was a salesman and I believed he was clever, for he always had an abundance of money and bought me many pretty dresses.

Almost every night we would go to the cabarets and supper clubs, where our table would be visited by men, usually the older ones, all in evening dress. Occasionally, when George left me briefly with one of these, his acquaintance would suggest that I slip away some time for the theatre or a luncheon with him, but I always refused. When I told my husband of these proposals, he only laughed. "Keep them good-natured," he would reply. "They like pretty, well-dressed theatrical women, and it helps my business."

But there came a time when I decided I must give up my exciting night life and prepare myself for serious duties—when I realized I was to become a mother. For some weeks I hesitated telling George, for he seemed so infatuated with our mode of living. But, finally, I had to speak. The result was the most terrible blow I ever received. My husband was furious. With a brutality which left me stunned and dazed, he told me that he had married me, because my good looks and obvious unsophistication would help him in his business and that as a wife with children I would only be a drag upon him. Half the night I pleaded with him to change his viewpoint, but the next day he left me, still in anger, and from his friends I learned that he had departed from the city with no intention of returning. And I also received hints that his methods would not bear close scrutiny, and that I was well rid of him before he got into serious difficulties.

The year which followed was a nightmare. By selling my possessions I managed to live until after my baby, Una, was born, then returned to the stage to support her and myself. It was a bitter experience, for nightly I was compelled to leave her with acquaintances in the boarding-house where we lived, while I went through my performance. But through all that time I was planning to free myself from the man who had so grievously deceived me, for I was determined he never should see the child he had hated even before she was born.

Finally, acting upon the advice of a friend, I moved across the river to a neighboring state, where I obtained a divorce on the ground of desertion. In the twelve months I waited for freedom I took care of a small apartment-house, the only work I could find which would permit me to be near my baby.

With George Gale legally out of my life, I returned to New York, but not to the stage. Instead, I became an artists' model and established a little home in a Greenwich Village studio building in the district in which lived most of those who employed me. When I worked I left my little one in the care of a nearby welfare home.

And it was not long after I began my new labors that I met Clifford Stanton, the second man to play a vital role in my life's story. He was an artist who had won a measure of success as a painter of church decorations, and he lived in the same building and was one of the first to employ me.

Clifford was so different from the usual run of artists that he impressed me from the outset. Big and strong, with the spreading shoulders of an athlete, he still looked

the hardy farm-boy he had been in his youth. And the hint of freckles beneath his tan, his mop of unruly hair, his happy laugh and unbounded good nature all bore testimony to his earlier care-free existence in the open. Perhaps it was the suggestion of the country about him which aroused my first friendly feelings. After that it was his love for Una—for they became great playmates—and his persistent efforts to aid me, which made him seem near and dear. And help me he surely did; everything from obtaining employment for me from his fellows to dropping into our quarters after dinner and assisting with the dishes.

Often, in the evening, when we sat alone, he would tell me of his early struggles to earn money to come to the city and study, and of his life in Seaport, up on the New England coast, a most wonderful place in the country,

where he had been born and reared.

But, when he finally asked me to marry him, I put him off. I loved him but still was afraid. I felt that if he too failed me, I should not care to live. However, he would not be denied, and at last I yielded, though not until I had told him everything of my past, particularly my life with George Gale. The two years which succeeded our wedding were the happiest I ever had known. Our bridal trip we had postponed until we could save sufficient money for a long vacation which, by mutual agreement, we decided should be spent at Seaport.

WEEK after week and month after month I looked forward to it, and I never shall forget the glad night when, after counting up our funds, we decided we possessed enough for at least a few months in the country, where there would be nothing to remind me of the blows which the cities had dealt.

* * *

The following day Clif wrote to [Turn to page 96]

Winners of the February Letter Contest

\$25.00 Prize

Miss Florence Cisch, Brooklyn, N. Y.

\$5.00 Prizes

Guy R. Fulp, Chapel Hill, N. C.

Marcy B. Darnall, Florence, Ala.

Mrs. Hazel Kanatzar, Centralia, Mo.

Mrs. Thos. K. Heath, Danville, Ill.

Miss Florence McCorkle, Los Angeles, Cal.

How about your letter of criticism?

Is the June better than the May issue?

How do you like this cover?

Does "Maria's Story" strike home with you?

Why not list them in the order of your preference—and don't forget to tell us if there's one you don't like, and why?



In My Blood There Really Was

A Little Bit of French

*Which Has to Do With Young People . . .
and Affectation . . . and a Well-Known War*

I SHOULD have been satisfied back in Kansas where I had enjoyed all the comforts of a good, middle-class, American home. Our big square white farmhouse had trim green blinds and a sloping Queen Anne roof. We had a velvety green lawn in front of the house, and the rear view was inspiring, too, with its vista of

well-kept barns and outbuildings painted in warm tones of red.

As a schoolgirl I had plenty of good clean fun, playing games in the corncrib and the spacious granary and fragrant hay-mow—somewhat of a devilish kid.

A great change seemed to come over me when I was in

my eighteenth year. I was a tom-boy no longer. I talked and dreamed of "art." Kansas would never satisfy me now, I thought. So, after considerable propaganda with Mother and Dad, I took the train at Cherryvale one day, bound for New York to study music.

Later, I suffered occasional pangs of homesickness and would have given a good deal to be back taking part in the church sociables and helping the boys and girls eat the fat tender "fried cakes" that the minister's wife always served with the coffee after the evening of fun. My stuffy little room in Greenwich Village had about the same cubic space as our neat little red-brick smokehouse back home. I often wished that I had continued my musical studies right back in Cherryvale. There was still a big range of improvement for me to find there, but of course that would have been too common-place for me.

AT FIRST, the excitement of getting settled in my new quarters kept me from being lonesome. My cheap little room was on Barrow Street, and to me this seemed a veritable Latin Quarter. It was my good fortune, or so I regarded it at that time, to board at a place where I met several young people who had come to New York to dabble in some branch of the arts.

I was particularly glad to meet Ernest Dukes, not that Ernest was any shiek in appearance but because he lived in what he called "The Crow's Nest," which was a delight to my impressionable girlish mind. "The Crow's Nest" was a sort of sky-bungalow on the roof of a building over near Christopher Street. Ernest had told me he was "a writer." He did write a good deal, it is true, but he sold none of his wares. However, his type was new to me then. I thought that at last I had met a real writer!

But if Ernest was a mediocre craftsman, he at least had the gift of locating unique quarters for a moderate rental. The sky-bungalow he inhabited was unheated, and usually was decidedly chilly from November to May, but it made a delightful studio-apartment from late spring to late autumn. I had been told that the quarters had been built by an eccentric millionairess and later abandoned by the whimsical old lady. The roof was one big skylight. The sides were also of glass, with probably as many as a hundred small square windows. It was a magic place to sit and dream and gossip on a balmy evening, with the phonograph responding to a soft needle and the senses responding to the kick of—well, I never drank much, but more than I would have liked my parents to know about.

Ernest had put on a "wow," as he called his party, in honor of the new girl from Kansas. There were four of us girls, and four fellows. We pushed back his typewriter table and rolled up the cheap grass rug, and danced until we didn't dare to play the music any longer, although Ernest insisted that up in "The Crow's Nest" there were no rules and that the sound of music could not be heard below. Later we fell to talking personalities.

My first name is Jacqueline. Ernest simply raved over my name. He inhaled a cigarette with a studied air. "You're French, aren't you?" he asked.

"Why—why, of course," I answered. "There's a little bit o' French on my mother's side." It was only a white lie, but I wondered what my parents would have thought of it. They were American to the core. I had every reason to be proud of my legitimate ancestry, but what silly things girls—young girls—will do under the influence of music, insidious drinks, flattery and what

they regard as an artistic atmosphere! And how blasé!

"I knew you were French," he said. "I've lived in Paris and I know a great many French girls. And—oh, boy!—some of them are naughty-naughty!"

I was so entranced with the atmosphere in which I found myself that I am afraid I gave entirely too much time to the discussion of art and very little to the actual study of it. I lost my sense of loneliness—for the folks back home at least. As the weeks wore on, I gradually came to be known as "Frenchy." The humorous part of the episode had commenced to wear off. I'd have felt dreadful by this time if anyone had doubted I was really French. I had pretended so long that I almost believed my own silly play-acting. It seems so ridiculous now, eight years later.

Ernest continued to put on "wows" in his odd retreat, although he was making no income from his writing and had taken a job in some small capacity in an advertising agency on Fourth Avenue. I met a Mr. Horton at one of these parties. Horton was a man old enough to be my father; later, in fact, I learned that he had a daughter of about my age. Before I knew he was married, however, I took dinner with him in his little studio near Sheridan Square. I realize now how lucky I was to have escape unscathed from the attentions of the peculiar kind of being I found him to be. My experience with him had a peculiar effect on me. It seemed to send me right

back into the arms of Ernie Dukes. At any rate, Ernie had youth, and he was unmarried. He had been courting me persistently, and if he had asked me to marry him that week I would have done so. The two of us together could have made a living.

Ernie, however, had far more Bohemian views than this. He wanted me to come and live with him. How I could have entertained his proposition for a moment, I can't understand now! Of course, I am several years older now. I suppose I was as much in love with Ernest's

cozy sky-bungalow as I was with Ernest himself. Spring was in the air, and romance, too. Ernest kept trying to persuade me. "Why, you're French," he would say. "This sort of thing was common when I lived the studio life in Paris. You've got the spirit and abandon of your race, haven't you, honey?"

All the spirit and abandon that I had seen of my race was the spirit and abandon that caused Dad to get up at five o'clock on a frosty fall morning, plow under the stubble in the northeast section, harrow it, drive in a good eight miles with a load of grain to the nearest grain elevator and get home in time to do the chores and go to bed before ten o'clock. And during this time Mother would have washed the breakfast dishes, watered the stock, read the morning paper which came with the mail over the Rural Free Delivery route, and performed the countless duties of a farmer's wife. But Ernest didn't know this, and I didn't tell him.

MY SUGGESTION hasn't shocked you, has it?" he asked me one day.

I blushed to think that such a suggestion would shock me. "Why, of course not," I replied indignantly. I have had several years of experience since then, and I do not hesitate to state that such a suggestion would shock me now—very much, indeed.

"Well," Ernest told me, "my cousin, Joe, is coming on to New York next week. He's going to be in town a little while and he'll expect to room with me, I suppose, unless I'm hooked up with someone [Turn to page 109]

*"I'm not a redhead,"
he told me one night.
"This hair of mine's
more of a pink, don't
you think so?"*

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*"I've got the spirit and
the abandon of your race,
haven't you, honey?"*

Judgment *of the* Jungle

*My Eyes, Dazzled
For a Moment,
Saw What at First
Appeared to Be
Only a Heavy Coil
of Rope. I Was
Staring at a
Rattlesnake as
Big Around as
a Man's Arm!*



I jerked myself suddenly to my senses and found myself staring straight into Anderson Holt's blue eyes.

AND if you ever so much as speak to Anderson Holt again, I will kill you or him—or both." My husband leaned toward me across the table, a grim finality in his tones that told me he meant exactly what he said. I shivered involuntarily. I had always been afraid of him. And now, alone in this Florida wilderness, where he had brought me on our honeymoon, he was threatening me with death! I had not even known he knew there was an Anderson Holt in the world—

His eyes gleamed as they saw the little tremor that ran through my flesh. "I see you understand me," he observed quietly, as he rose. "That is well."

I sat on alone in the candle-lit dining-room while my mind groped back—and back—

I was a student in the training school of a big Chicago hospital when I first met David Dunbar. I had come

there from a small town out West after the bank crash which had led to my father's ruin and suicide. My mother and I crept away without saying good-by to a soul. I was young and proud and could not bear to face our disgrace in the place where I had always been petted and popular and—"the prettiest girl in town." Least of all, could I bear to face Anderson Holt, the brilliant young lawyer from the East, whose attentions to me had begun to make my future seem like a happy dream. That part of my life, I told myself fiercely, was done.

The first year passed quickly. My mother was completely broken down by what had happened, and put herself entirely in my hands. A small income from my father's life insurance was left. I found her a room in a dingy lodging-house on North LaSalle Street, and flung myself into the work of the training school. I liked it



because it left me every night with aching limbs and swimming head, too tired to do anything but sink into blessed forgetfulness upon my bed.

The other girls were friendly, and some of the internes tried to get acquainted with me, but I kept to myself. In my youthful bitterness, I told myself I no longer belonged to the world where people laughed and talked and had good times. I saw my life stretching ahead of me in grey monotony to middle age.

Then I met David. He was one of the most distinguished men on the hospital staff—a big, dark, forbidding-looking man, only thirty-five, but already reputed to be one of the most brilliant surgeons in that section. His women patients were said to be crazy about him, and he was engaged to the daughter of a prominent banker on the North Shore, but the nurses were all afraid of him. You could always tell when he was in the hospital by a kind of nervous tension that ran through the corridors.

Nothing could have been farther from my thoughts than that such a man should notice me. I have nice hair, very dark and thick, delicate features, and grey eyes; but I was so tired and unhappy in those days that I scarcely thought about my looks at all. Yet notice me, he did—and with a woman's intuition I was aware of it. Sometimes the memory of his piercing eyes would stay with

me all day after he had spoken to me in the corridor.

Perhaps my whole life would have been different if I had been more sociable that year and listened to the gossip around me more. There came an August morning when Dr. Dunbar came down to the hospital looking especially tight-lipped and grim. I saw the nurses whispering together about something in the newspaper, but I paid no more attention to them than I ever did. That night was my night off. I was hurrying along to catch a street-car to my mother's lodging-house, when Dr. Dunbar's grey roadster drew up at my side.

"May I give you a lift, Miss Dryden?" he asked pleasantly.

The surprise of it took my breath away. It had never occurred to me that his interest could go so far. I accepted without stopping to think, though I knew what I was doing was against the rules of the training school.

"Oh, I should have told you! I meant to get out three blocks back—at LaSalle Street." I roused myself suddenly as we swung into the light-spotted sweep of Michigan Avenue, and I felt the cool lake breeze in my hair. "I was going home."

"Oh, I should have told you! I meant to get out three blocks back—at LaSalle Street." I roused myself suddenly as we swung into the light-spotted sweep of Michigan Avenue, and I felt the cool lake breeze in my hair. "I was going home."

"PLENTY of time for that," he observed quietly. "A little fresh air will do you good."

I was not used to such high-handed treatment from

"There was an ugly story about David and an early morning ride to an exclusive country club, and a caddy."



Hesitating for a moment, I scarcely knew which concerned me most—my love for Andy or my hate for David.

men, but I did not dream of objecting. No one ever objected to anything Dr. Dunbar wanted to do. Perhaps, I thought, he just meant to be kind to a tired girl. But his face, as I stole a glance at it, did not look kind. He was staring straight ahead of him with compressed lips and narrowed eyes, seemingly unconscious that I was by his side. If only I could have looked into his mind then and read his seething thoughts!

Suddenly he roused himself from his abstraction and began to talk to me—and talked as I had never heard a

man talk before. It seemed as if he had been every place and seen everything. To my flattered amazement, I realized that, quite obviously, he had set himself to the task of interesting *me*.

That was the beginning of the strangest courtship a girl ever had. I grew to live for the nights when a grey car would nose up to my side, and a man would lean forward, beckoning me to get in. And yet I could not have told whether or not I really liked Dr. Dunbar. There were times when I seemed to sense something dark and secret in his soul. At the same time, he exercised an almost hypnotic influence over me. It made me shudder sometimes to think of his power. What did he want of me?

MY HEART fluttered wildly that windy night in October when he parked his car at the end of a side street, near the lake, and I saw his face bend over me. "Elinor," he began huskily, and my hands rose as if to shut his face away. He caught them firmly in a grip of iron, his voice going on and on.

Now—now—I told myself amidst the strange terrifying new emotions that were flaming through me at his touch—now is the time to be brave—to be strong—refuse—jerked myself upright suddenly as I realized he was asking me to marry him. Dazedly I stared at him, remembering—

"But Miss Manville?" I stam-

mered. "Your fiancée?"

David's face darkened and, for the first time since I had known him, I saw an expression of doubt or uncertainty cross his eyes.

"Miss Manville and I are no longer engaged," he said briefly. "Didn't you know?" He looked at me curiously. "Perhaps I ought to tell you—" Suddenly he checked himself. After a pause, I felt his strong fingers close over mine. "It's yes, isn't it, little girl?"

I didn't ask myself what it was he should have told me.

I knew only he was asking something of me and—as always—I was powerless to refuse.

Two weeks later we left for Florida to spend our honeymoon at Dark Water, an estate David had inherited from his grandfather. He had urged an immediate marriage, saying he was tired of Chicago and wanted to get away. A kind of panic came over me as I found myself alone on the train with him. What did I really know of this man who was taking me so far away? What did he know of me? What kind of basis for married life was the strange, half-fearful attraction he had for me? Then I forgot all my fears in my delight in my new home.

TO REACH it, one had to drive twenty miles through virgin forests on a pineneedle road. The nearest town was Crystal Cove, a fashionable seaside resort, twenty miles away. A soft warm rain was falling the day we arrived, bathing the whole countryside in a greyish mist through which rose the yellowish trunks of the tall swaying pines. It was very different from the vivid tropical scenery I had expected to see, but my heart went out to its quiet beauty instantly. Then suddenly a mass of junglelike growth seemed to spring out of the ground and close over our heads, as our car dipped down a little hill. We had come to some of the fertile soil, bearing a dense tropical growth, which people down here call "hammock land." Crowded palms, an impenetrable undergrowth, thick coiled grapevines looping their way from tree to tree, white poisonous-looking flowers shining through the gloom—this was more like the South I had expected to see. My heart jumped as I saw the tail of a big snake vanish from the road.

Dark Water itself was a pretty, rambling, brown-

shingled house on the shore of a lovely, wild-looking little lake. I quickly grew to love every blade of grass and tree—the beautiful little rose garden which Mose, our darky gardener, had tended for so many years; the lily pads and rushes of the little cove where David had surprised me with the gift of a polished cedarwood canoe; even the queer jungle path. I was never lonely, even when David would leave me, as he sometimes did, for long days of hunting in the woods. He seemed happy, too. I began to forget my fears of him and, when I was in his arms, felt a wild passion rising in my own heart to match his fire.

Then one morning while I was at breakfast, I received a letter from my mother that shattered my little structure of love and hope about my ears.

She had learned the real reason for David's break with Dorothy Manville. Someone in the family hotel where we had established her before we left, had let it slip. There was an ugly story about David and an early morning ride to an exclusive country club, and a caddy hauled out from behind a hedge where he was skylarking with another boy and beaten with a riding whip. It had taken all the power of David's wealth and influence to keep the case from coming into court. He had been dropped from the club. Two days later the invitations to the Manville-Dunbar wedding were withdrawn.

I SAT for a long time with the letter in my hand, staring out unseeing at sunshine and dancing leaves. David had already left for the woods. David! So my fears of him were justified. There *was* something strange and dark in his nature . . . But it was not this thought that chained me to my seat while the negro servants shuffled and whispered behind the door. It was the



Yes, there they were—two tiny needle-like punctures on David's ankle. Before I had seen it the snake had struck.

thought that my husband had never loved me at all. I remembered that August morning in the hospital. So this is what the nurses had been whispering about! I had been used as a pawn. He had married me to spite Dorothy Manville. Knowing his nature as I did, I felt that to achieve the same end he would have married a girl of the streets.

Suddenly I was on my feet—in my room. I was dressing feverishly. One of the pickaninnies was running across the lawn to tell Ned Whittlesey, David's driver, to bring the car to the door. My voice sounded strange in my own ears as I said: "Drive me to Crystal Cove—to the Inlet Inn."

It was the height of the season, and the big hotel was swarming with people as I walked up the steps. I was obeying a blind instinct in coming here—to get away—to forget—if only for a day! I feasted my eyes on the pretty girls, the well-dressed men, the cars sliding up to the curb. I knew no one, but it was enough for me that day just to see happy carefree people and know they were in the world. I found a seat on one of the broad verandas, overlooking the Bay, and set myself to calm my raging thoughts. And then—

In my blind unhappiness it seemed to me like providence

I became aware that a tall man about ten feet away was staring at me steadily. Gradually his figure took shape through the mists of my reverie. I jerked myself suddenly to my senses and found myself, for the first time in two years, staring straight into Anderson Holt's blue eyes!

It was five o'clock when I got home that afternoon. I was still quivering with excitement. My mind dwelt happily on the moment when Anderson Holt had sprung toward me with outstretched hands: on the delicious luncheon we had eaten together in the wide, cool dining-room of the big hotel; on the glorious ride afterward down the shore road in his low-slung yellow racing car.

How handsome Andy was! Carefree, eager, and boyish, too—not like David, with his queer dark ways. He made me feel like a woman again—a happy, beloved woman with a right to life and joy.

The early tropical darkness had fallen as I rushed into my room. I could hear David's voice coming up through the woods, calling to his dogs. The sound sobered me. After all, I was his wife . . .

That night at dinner I did a hard thing. I asked David to take me back to Chicago soon, saying I was tired of Florida. David looked at me curiously, clipping an end from his cigar.

IT'S out of the question. We must stay here till spring."

"But, David," I protested. "Your career!" Would he take that tone with me, I wondered, if he knew I was asking him to take me away because, hating him as I now did, I couldn't trust myself with my old lover if I stayed?

His face clouded moodily: "Hang my career!"

My heart flamed with anger. I knew he was thinking of the scandal that was waiting for him at home, but I

was entitled to some consideration as his wife. He owed me at least an explanation of his plans. If he denied it to me, why should I consider him? That night I wrote a note to Anderson Holt, giving him the promise I had refused him that afternoon: to meet him two days later at the same time at Crystal Cove.

I WAS cutting roses in the garden ten days later, thinking happily about Anderson Holt, when David came by on his way from the stable to the house, and stood for a moment looking down at me. I felt a little trickle of terror run down my spine. I had been seeing Andy nearly every day. Lately he had even dared to come to Dark Water at night. I would slip out of the house while David was drowsing over his books, meet Andy in the jungle path, and we would sit together in his car, laughing and whispering together in the warm sweet night. I knew I was playing with fire, but I didn't care. Andy and I had been boy and girl together, and I blinded myself to the fact that we were man and woman now, and to the look of a man's passion that I saw growing in his eyes. I told myself that I was safe from David—none of the servants would dare tell him what I did, and I was always home at dusk when he returned. But now,

with his shadow falling past me across the grass, I felt all my old fear of him awake.

My heart almost stopped beating when he said: "Elinor, I don't want you to go out of the house alone at night any more."

I hadn't even known that he had ever missed me! My mouth felt dry, but I managed to protest: "But David—why? The nights are so beautiful, and—there's so little to do."

"Come with me," said David shortly, turning upon his heel. Was he going to confront me with some evidence of Andy's visits?

I was almost fainting as I

followed him to the stable from which he had just come.

"Moses, show Mrs. Dunbar what you have there."

The old negro, bending over, pulled something out of a box and flung it on the floor. My eyes, dazzled from the sun outside, saw at first what appeared to be only a thick heavy coil of rope. Then I gave a cry. I was staring at a dead rattlesnake—six feet long and as big around as a man's arm. I shuddered as I turned my eyes away from it.

"That's why I don't want you to go out at night any more," David told me as he walked back toward the house. "Moses killed it in the jungle today. This is the time of the year when they begin to come out of their holes. The bite of one of those big fellows is almost certain death. You've only about twenty minutes to live, if they drive their venom into a vein. It's different if a young snake strikes you—or if it strikes through some heavy substance, like a boot. It takes prompt action and careful nursing, but you have a fighting chance. You give potassium of permanganate, and slash the wound—"

He launched into a doctor's description of the treatment of snakebite, but I was not listening. I had caught a glimpse of how I would feel if my husband knew about me and Anderson Holt, and I was still shivering. For the first time I faced the situation [Turn to page 101]

"The doctor sent me from the room. All day and all night I walked up and down the corridor while, behind a closed door . . . ?"
"If he were to die now—before I know—?"



"Don't make it harder, little Hester. My heart was here with you, dear."

Doctors' Wives

*Part Two of the Story Wherein a Girl
Learns the Meaning of Two Words*

BECAUSE my father thought of me as a sort of nuisance and went so far as to appoint two governesses to relieve him further of any responsibility in my care, I resolved to relieve *him* fully.

When I went to see Dr. George Draper, I wasn't ill. He soon saw that. I had heard of him as a young doctor who was "simply lovely" with his patients. This proved to be true, not only of him but of his partner, Dr. Ralph Chase. I was on good terms with both. Repeated calls to see George, with flirtations on the side with Ralph, brought about a peculiar situation. Each man appealed to a different side of my nature. Thus it went on until Dr. Chase broke one of my appointments with Dr. Draper in order to take me home in his car. This trick caused me to drop Dr. Chase very suddenly.

Soon after, my father received an anonymous message that I was carrying on an affair with Dr. George Draper. The outcome of this was that I was sent away from home to get a statement from the doctor, or never return. I didn't return; I married Dr. Draper that afternoon.

Part Two

WHEN, after hearing the house door close softly, I fully realized that my husband of a few hours had left me alone on our wedding night, and would probably be gone until dawn, I yielded myself to unreasonable fury. It did not matter to me, at that moment, that he had gone on an errand of mercy, at the call of a dying woman's daughter who trusted in George's

medical skill to restore her mother to consciousness.

The day had been so feverishly crowded with strange events from the moment my father had driven me from home until I returned to this house in the evening as the wife of Dr. George Draper, that I could not yet understand that I was married to a man whose life could not be called his own.

Although, but a scant half hour before, I had dreaded the first moments of intimacy, through ignorance of the real significance of marriage, I now felt cheated and thwarted.

All this sounds inconsistent; nevertheless, this was my reaction, and I am trying my best to set down the truth, in spite of the fact I may not be understood.

At six in the morning my husband came slowly upstairs, only to find me in tears. He who needed comfort after a night's vigil at a deathbed now turned to comfort his silly wife who was sorrier for herself than for him.

He sank into a chair and, drawing me towards him, whisked me into his arms as if I were a child to be cuddled and sheltered. I cried more bitterly.

"Don't make it harder for me, little Hester," he crooned softly. "Don't make it harder. For the first time in my life I found it difficult to keep my thought on the patient. My heart was here with you, dear."

"It was so lonesome," I wailed.

"I saved that woman's life: and that is what counts."

"Doesn't our happiness count?" I wanted to know.

"Yes, dear. But each of us must seek happiness in his own way. When you are not so exhausted, I'll tell you what it means to be a doctor's wife."

"It's horrid, being a doctor's wife!" I cried, but George was looking down at me with eyes so inexpressibly tender that further complaint died in my throat.

* * * * *

My father never acknowledged the announcement of my marriage.

Day succeeded day. Each seven days marked the passing of a week. Each four weeks meant another month gone. And still I held to my original belief that it was horrid to be a doctor's wife.

I think that there must be women all over the country now who are in the position that I was then. Young girls married to busy, earnest physicians. Young girls eager for laughter and gaiety and the lighter side of life. Young girls who make no effort to appreciate the sacredness of their husbands' profession. Young girls who believe themselves misunderstood because their husbands cannot find time to participate in their giddy pleasure.

When George and I first became friends, I believed that out of all the world he understood best what was in my heart. It is strange that after we were married, I persuaded myself that he did not understand me at all.

I was not different. Not that George was not the soul of kindness; I think now that he was too kind. If he had been a little firmer, I might have come to realize my duty before that disgraceful affair almost separated us forever.

George was generous and considerate. He derived his greatest pleasure from seeing me happy, and yet I simply would not be happy.

He had always kept a Scotch couple, man and wife, to care for the place. Now he added another to his staff, a motherly housekeeper who lifted every ounce of responsibility from my shoulders. So I had nothing to do but to give a few moments of companionship each day to George; nothing to do but be his inspiration, as I had promised I would.

I had the rarest opportunity ever granted to woman. I might have made myself the very soul of his existence, his haven of refuge from the ills of mankind. Instead, I fretted and pouted and complained because we scarcely

ever had an uninterrupted hour together. When I saw George get out his records after dinner to study certain cases, I would grow wild with anger.

"Don't you ever think of anybody but your old patients?" I often asked him.

His answer was always the same. "Yes, dear, of you. I never see a woman come into the office without I think of how you looked that first day." Then often he would add, "You do love me, don't you, Hester," as if there might be a tiny doubt in his mind.

I never answered this question directly. Usually I hid my face against his coat, and believing me naturally shy he would take my movement as assurance that I did love him.

But, as a matter of fact, there was still a doubt in my own mind as to whether I had done the wisest thing after all. I respected George. I stood in tremendous awe of him. Secretly

I was proud of his love for me. But what was my feeling for him? Was it the deep, everlasting emotion I had read about? Or was it just a hothouse flower that was dying with the first chill wind?

Sometimes George said to me, "I heard the nurses at the hospital talking about a good play they'd seen last night. Wouldn't you like to go to it tomorrow, Hester?"

"Couldn't you come too, George?"

TO A PLAY? That's impossible, child. You go and enjoy it for both of us. Get Mrs. Roberts or somebody to go with you. Though I might manage some evening."

"Oh, what's the use of going out with you at night if you insist on leaving your seat number at the box office? Somebody always sends for you."

Often enough George had explained his attitude to me, but he never tired of trying to make me understand that a physician must give his whole heart to his work.

"Not half a heart; his whole heart. Every drop of

Still Sawing Wood!

We haven't been doing much shouting lately, have we? But we've cut down enough timber for next winter and we're still sawing wood!

All we need now is kindling to start the fire—and your ideas are the things we're after. We stirred up some little fuss with our High School story and we're on the trail of another. It was suggested by one of our readers.

There is a prize of \$25 waiting for the best letter of criticism on the June issue, and \$5 each for the five next best. Letters must bear a postmark not later than midnight, June 15th. Prizes will be awarded July 1st. The editors will be the judges.

blood in his body. Every ounce of energy. Every minute of thought. It isn't like a business, dear, where the shades are drawn and the shop closed until the next morning. It's dealing with human beings—sick, broken, desperate human beings."

"But do I have to put my heart and my blood into it, too?"

"In a way, dear, yes. You are my wife; you can inspire me by sympathizing with my devotion to a great cause. And it hurts me to see you think that I'm neglecting you."

"Well—you are," I accused many a time.

ESPECIALLY if you are young, and pretty, and married, there is always another man somewhere in the vicinity who is glad to "understand" you better than you think your husband does.

In my case, this man happened to be Ralph Chase, who reappeared after George and I were married six months. He entered my life precisely as he had dropped from it, with a telephone call; and certainly it would have been best for me if I had abided by my original decision to have nothing to do with him again.

One afternoon I was roaming around indoors unhappily, hoping against hope that George would be able to escort me to the Ladies' Auxiliary tea, when the private telephone in our apartment rang. Instantly I recognized Ralph Chase's "Hello," and to tell the truth I was pleased to have somebody to talk to. Still, recalling the occasion for our break, I could not be too friendly. So I pretended not to know who he was, finally forcing him to tell me.

"I want to come up to see you, Hester," he said. The same old impudent Ralph was coming out directly with the most preposterous requests.

"You know I'm married to Dr. Draper, don't you?"

The rueful quality of his laugh was not lost over the wires. "Yes, I heard that, Hester. I should have written my congratulations, but—well—I hated to think you married, and all that. That's really no excuse, only I hope your new life gives you a little time for an old friend."

I held on to my resentment firmly, and wondered how he figured that we were still friends.

THINKING of our last conversation, Hester? Listen—I've got something to tell you. Please let me come up."

I insisted that he should tell me then and there.

"I can't," he said. "It's a confession." I remember how hesitant he was, how apologetic. "It's something I've done that I've got to tell you about. It concerns you, too. I can't rest until I get it out of my mind. Please, Hester."

The wheedling note in his voice was gradually casting the old spell over me. I had nothing to do anyway. In all probability George would not get [Turn to page 105]



"It won't take more than an hour," he apologized. "I'm having a wonderful time, George," I answered.

What Becomes of



"Good luck, Pat," I murmured; "only watch your step."

*Did You
Ever Stop
to Wonder
Where
All the
Millionaire
Husbands
Come From?
Maybe There
Aren't That
Many!*

IN THE last four years I've worked in various shows, including two famous productions. I've succeeded in my small way—so far as a chorus girl can succeed through the mere assets of an attractive appearance and a passable voice; I'm able to earn my living and take care of myself; I'm a wiser, if not happier, girl who has learned that the chorus girls' millionaire "catches" are myths.

My father was a carpenter contractor in a small Pennsylvania manufacturing town. Although we were not poor, my father's income was eaten up by the necessities of the family, in which there were seven children, so that by the time I graduated from high school, I had to find some occupation.

I had always dreamed of going on the stage. I could dance; I had a fair voice; people told me that I was

pretty. So, I cherished the hope of one day going to New York and getting into the chorus of a production like Mr. Ziegfeld's Follies or the Winter Garden Revue.

My mother had her heart set on my becoming a teacher. She was not an unkindly woman, but old-fashioned and "set" in her point of view, and scorned my own ambition to go on the stage. To be a teacher was, to her, the height of professional success for a woman; to be the wife of a settled and prosperous man, even more, the ultimate in woman's career. Lack of finances at the time meant that I couldn't go to the State Normal School; so, to earn the money necessary to clothe myself becomingly, I took a job as operator in the local telephone exchange.

My only suitor was not demonstrative and did not make love in the romantic fashion of the motion picture

the Follies Girls?



Every night the dressing-room buzzed with a chitter-chatter of gossip.

actors I admired. I know now that his devotion was all the more sincere by reason of its profound and quiet depth. A pleasure-loving, admiration-seeking, and ambitious girl, I was incapable of appreciating Ralph's sterling qualities.

AFTER he had graduated from high school, Ralph went to work in his uncle's foundry. He put on overalls and worked among the moulders. He said he was going to learn the business from the ground up. He expected eventually, as his uncle was unmarried, to get control of the plant. And then he would talk about buying a big house on the outskirts of the town. An established home, a dutious wife, children, a profitable business—that was his dream. Ralph had in him the makings of what they call a substantial, one-hundred percent American—what I now know as the finest, most dependable, most devoted kind of man.

Ralph took our engagement for granted. But I couldn't see myself settling down in the rut of domestic life in that small town.

I had been working in the telephone exchange for about a year when a rolling mill along the river was taken over by a New York concern. Came to the town, as its

manager, the son of one of the owners, a breezy chap concerning whom a lot of gossip was presently rife. People whispered his father had got him away from New York because of his fast life. That had, seemingly, only the effect of enhancing his attraction to the town girls. He sported a swell car and a fast motor launch. Rennie Sheridan didn't exactly meet my ideals; he was good-looking, but of somewhat too stolid build; somewhat too cocksure and egotistical of manner. But he did have a line of talk!

OUR flirtation began over the telephone. Next, on various pretexts, he came to the exchange. For a time I refused his invitations to dances and motor rides. Something about him, only vaguely felt, filled me with distrust. But, unlike the youths of the town, he was self-poised and citified in his flatteries.

I first accepted an invitation to a Saturday night dance after a quarrel with Ralph. Ralph objected to "that fellow's coming so often to the exchange." People were talking about it. To spite Ralph, I accepted.

My first date with Rennie was followed by others. Together we attended the bi-weekly dances at the river resorts: We went motoring together. On the night of

a full moon, we sped in his motor launch over the gleaming river.

Rennie, whom I first distrusted, won me by his charm. I told him all about my secret ambitions.

"You're sure a flower blushing in the desert air in this dead hole," he said. "Why not cut loose and beat it for the big town? There isn't a painted peach in Ziggy's crop who compares with you, and as for the Winter Garden!—say, I know a lot of managers. Anytime you think you can motor over with me on a week-end trip, I'll see you get the proper introductions. Say, kid, those hands aren't made for the wash-board and dish-pan. With your looks, some day you ought to have your name in electric lights."

The crisis came unexpectedly. People began to talk about my going out with Sheridan. My mother, hearing the gossip, began chiding me. That only aroused a stubborn determination to defy my critics. Ralph began to complain. That made me mad.

ONE night when we were out motoring, Rennie's car had a breakdown. When I got home, at two in the morning, I found my mother and Ralph waiting for me.

My mother raged. Ralph, almost weeping, pleaded.

"Don't you care what people are saying about you? If you think more of running around with a married man than you do of me—"

"What do I care what people say!" I cried, hurt and furious. "What do you mean to me? And he's not married!"

"He's got a wife in New York," said Ralph. "I've got it straight. And if you think more of him, I'll step out."

"You'll do what's right by Ralph or you'll get out," my mother said. "If I hear of your being with that fellow again, you'll find another roof over your head."

The next morning at breakfast the row started again, and of course Rennie dropped into the telephone exchange.

"What's wrong, kid? In the dumps?"

"They've been raising a fuss at home. Oh, if I could only run away. They just make me sick!"

"Say, how long are you going to stand that gaff? What're you going to do? Stay in this hick town, or make a try in the white lights?"

"I—I'm not going to stay here," I sobbed.

"Now, I've got to leave for the big town tonight. You just mosey over with me. I'll see you're fixed up at a nice hotel. With the right introductions, you ought to

land in a show in two or three weeks. They're beginning their fall productions now. Or—or—is it that you want to stay here and marry Ralph?"

"I—I—oh, I'll go! But—but—I don't have much money—"

"Don't you bother about the money—" He patted me on the back. "As long as you're nice to me, I'll be good to you. And I'll put you right in the big town."

Steeling myself against backing out, that afternoon I drew my savings account, amounting to over sixty dollars, from the bank. That evening I packed my belongings and got them out of the house to a rear alley where Rennie was waiting.

We got into the city shortly after one o'clock in the morning. Fearful of the future, a sort of terror swept

upon me as we sped through the chasm-like streets from the ferry. Rennie stopped his car before a small hotel in the Forties, near Broadway. It struck me that he seemed well known to the sleepy porter who took our baggage.

Quaking, filled with a nervous embarrassment, I followed him to the desk where a clerk opened a book and extended a pen. Mechanically my gaze followed his hand as he began to write *Mr. and Mrs.*—

"But you and I aren't married," I gasped, staying his arm. "You—you don't mean to register us together? Why—why—they told me at home you were married."

Rennie shrugged his shoulders, and spoke to the clerk in an irritated, sarcastic voice. "Country girl—leaving home, you know—little excited. Well," turning to

me, "listen, kiddo! Don't make a rumpus here. I'll get you a separate room, see? You get a good night's snooze, and your nerves'll be quieter. We'll talk things over at breakfast in the morning."

But I didn't see Rennie at breakfast. My door locked, I lay awake until dawn. Then I crept out and down the staircase winding about the elevator, with my suitcase and sixty-odd dollars. Followed days in a dingy room in a lodging-house; a tramping about to agents' and producers' offices. The first job I got was posing for a photographer who illustrated magazine stories. I earned ten dollars.

IN THE course of a month I became known at photographers and secured a number of engagements posing. An art photographer, who took an interest in me, knew the producer of one of the most famous beauty

One Hundred Girls

Of one hundred girls who have been in the chorus during the last two years:

1 is happily married to a rich man.

11 are happily married to poor men, musicians, actors, etc.

26 are still playing, either on Broadway or on tour.

29 have drifted from the stage to the cabarets and summer resorts, where the demands are not so strict.

33 are divorced from men whom they married supposing them rich. Most of these men are relatives of rich men. Many of these girls have returned to the Stage.



revues. He said he was casting for his annual production.

"I'll give you a note to him," he said. "Take a couple of photographs with you."

How my knees shook under me as I went up the elevator to the office of this czar of theatricaldom! At last! On my way to a stage career—and a millionaire Romeo!

"Mr. X— isn't in now," I was told. "But he's expected any minute. Will you wait?"

I should say I would! I waited from three o'clock until after six. Then a tall man, with humorous, keenly-penetrating eyes, came up to me.

"You're the girl who's been waiting to see me? Well, I'm putting on a road-show now. Maybe I could use you in that. Rehearsals are beginning. Can you sing? Dance?"

I told him I could sing and dance, but I didn't want to go into a road-show. I wanted to play in New York.

He smiled. "I see. I'm not quite ready yet for my New York production. But leave your address. If I can use you, I'll send for you."

That was all. Day by day I waited. Each morning I rushed downstairs to sort through the mail. Despairing, at last I gave up and again went the round of agents' offices. One morning—a little over three weeks after I had seen the producer—a note arrived. Would I call at the office? I hurried downtown; I was engaged.

Yes, I was actually engaged for what is possibly the most famous beauty chorus in the country. I was just about seventeen when I made my debut on a gala opening night, when I first realized the anticipated thrill of dancing and singing before—no, not the cream of young and handsome manhood; most of the men were middle-aged and elderly, grey-haired or baldheaded.

Every night the dressing-room, shared by ten girls, buzzed with a chitter-chatter of gossip. As we sat before the tables engaged in our make-up there were whisperings of intimate confidences. And the talk? Pick-ups with men. Some girl being cut dead by so and so at the Claridge. Another's "Harold" giving her the "icy mitt." Almost nightly there were quarrels among the girls over beaux. But it rather surprised me to find that there was no line-up of proverbial rich Johnnies waiting at the stage exit.

WHY, don't you know Mr. B— enforces strict rules against fellows hanging around the theatre," said Patsy Moran, who shared my dressing table. "We got to meet them outside." Patsy, according to her confidences, met many.

"I used to believe the girls got mash notes and flowers every night," I sighed.

"He's gone
—he's gone!
And he
wasn't a real
estate dealer
at all!"



"But don't you meet a lot of rich, young fellows?"

"Oh, maybe once in a while some guy'll spot you out and hang around till he picks you up. But the girls who get the flowers have their regulars. Believe me, little Patsy's waiting just to land some kind old angel."

"But don't you meet a lot of rich, young fellows?"

"Young?" Patsy grunted. "These greenhorns don't have any dough. If there's anything I hate, it's a college fellow. They get tight, and then they get fresh. And they're always long on the talk and short on cash. It's the older birds that fall easy. And you can just wrap 'em around your little finger. If I ever marry, it's going to be a soft old codger."

IT WAS a strange world to me at first—this back-stage world of girls of whom so few seemed to have a serious ambition for a higher career in the theatrical world; so few a serious aim in life.

"When I go out with a fellow," said Gloria B—, who subsequently was starred in musical comedy through the offices of a millionaire, "I figure out how much my time is worth. An hour at luncheon, a dress, an evening's supper, a month's rent of my apartment. It's easy if you play the game, dearie. At lunch you've got to rush away to pose for a photographer to earn enough for a new dress—you just don't have a single thing to wear! Then sugar papa, who is looking for something more than a demi-tasse afterwards, hedges around as to how much a new gown will cost, and couldn't we drop in at a modiste's? See? Or if he comes for a nice fatherly talk at the apartment after a midnight supper, well—a

bellhop comes up with your arrears for rent. The management sends word you have to pay up or get out. You weep and get hysterical. And papa, who's looking forward to other calls, comes across with the cash. Gee, it's a great life, dearie, if you don't weaken. I got my month's rent on six consecutive nights running."

Gloria was regarded as one of the most efficient gold diggers in the company. She was hard as nails.

"But don't you want to get married?" I asked. "I want to get married, and I'll be frank to say I want to marry a rich man. I thought the stage was the short cut to love and riches."

Gloria scoffed. "Rich men'll woo. But they don't generally wed. As they say, dearie, 'Dig while the digging's good.'"

Somewhat disillusioned by the girls' sophistication, I nevertheless remained a skeptic. Howsoever that romance had ended, hadn't Evelyn Nesbit married Harry Thaw? Hadn't Mabel Gilman married Mr. William Ellis Corey?

AT FIRST, hardly a night came but I didn't put my hand on the knob of the exit door without a half-hope my Romeo would be waiting for me.

It wasn't long, however, before the glamor of the footlights began to dim. Rehearsals were tedious. I found a chorus career hard and trying work. However it may appear to a stage-struck country girl, the back-stage world is dingy, sordid; the girls are treated by producers and managers as

sort of human animals, just trained to perform.

Seeking to make myself more distinguished in my work than the rest, I took up dancing and vocal lessons. My improvement was soon noticeable, and the stage manager shifted me from the back row to a special song and dance feature of ten girls. My connection with the organization helped me to get engagements posing for artists and photographers. I was featured in the advertisements of a Fifth Avenue department store, and each time earned twenty-five dollars. I felt I was getting on. Fortunately for my work and my health, I refused most of the girls' invitations to join them in booze and jazz parties. I wasn't looking for an "angel." I was looking for my "prince." He would be rich, yes; and handsome, surely; and there would be a marriage, of course. There would be luxury, but also love.

"Listen, kid," panted my friend, Patsy, as she rushed breathlessly into the dressing-room one night. "I've just met the swellest guy! He's made a fortune in real estate in Oklahoma! And he wants me to go to supper."

I'd found it was part of the game for two girls generally to play together. Where there was a supper in a private dining-room, the company of an extra girl prevented any too insistent attentions on the part of the host to the other.

"All right," I agreed, as I liked Patsy and was not averse to doing her a good turn. After the show, at the supper in a private dining-room, I studied Patsy's pick-up—a heavy, red-faced man of middle age. He seemed quite smitten with the girl. I didn't see how Patsy could

stand him. And that was her idea of a swell guy! "Tomorrow night, girls," said our genial host at parting. "I'll have a friend of mine along—business associate—good sport. Now you come—" squeezing my hand—"and treat my friend right. I'll see you won't lose anything by it. Glad to've met you. You're all wool and a yard wide—"

The following evening two boxes arrived in our dressing room, addressed to Patsy and me. Inside of each was a bouquet of orchids—the first flowers I'd received in three months. Inside of each bouquet was an envelope. The envelope contained a gold piece. Patsy was ecstatic. But I refused to accompany her to the scheduled supper.

"Well, I'm going!" declared Patsy. "He likes me, and, dearie, can you say he ain't generous? Honest, I believe he'd marry me if I said the word."

"Good luck, Pat," I murmured; "only watch your step."

For four consecutive nights Patsy's friend occupied a seat in the front row. Each night Patsy went out with him; every afternoon she went motoring. Every day he gave Patsy something: dresses, a diamond ring, silk stockings, money.

"Ain't he the dearest thing?" she raved. "So con-

siderate and kind! Why, he just spends his money like water. Why, why, I—I couldn't refuse him anything. And I'm sure he's going to propose—I feel it in my bones it's coming tonight."

The triumph of poor Patsy's conquest was likewise brief. On a Monday night Patsy, red-eyed, flung herself into our midst.

"He's gone—he's gone!" she sobbed. "And he wasn't a real estate dealer at all! He was a bootlegger! And what's worse—he's married and got two children! He told me about them before he left. And he gave me two hundred dollars! But what's that when he led me on to believe he was going to marry me, and me coming near to loving him?"

LOVING!" purred Gloria, passing a rabbit's foot over her face. "Him or his roll? Women like men. We love their purse. The only language of love I understand's the talk of money."

One night there was a vacancy in the show.

"Did you hear the latest? Geraldine's eloped with Danny. Yes, they motored up to Connecticut somewhere to get hitched. Think of that up-stage dame landing him. Why, the old man's [Turn to page 114]



"Did you hear the latest? Geraldine's eloped with Danny."



On

"Can I Let as if He I Asked

me. What I did want was to get through that door—quickly. And that was the one thing it seemed I couldn't do.

ONE of the pests insisted, in a half-joking way, on taking my bundle. Unfortunately, in trying to keep it away from him, I pulled a little too hard. It split in the middle, and the soiled linen, John's and mine, was scattered over the lobby floor. I could have cried when I saw those intimate articles of wearing apparel exposed to the astonished gaze of the hotel loungers and the passersby who kept peering in. As if that was not enough, John had to choose that particular moment in which to come home.

He took in the situation at a glance. I carefully avoided his eyes, while a passing baggage-man picked the things up and wrapped them in a paper which somebody, with suspicious courtesy, handed him.

After that John took the parcel to our room upstairs—and paced up and down like a tiger I had seen in the zoo.

I could have cried when I saw those intimate articles of wearing apparel exposed to the astonished gaze of the hotel loungers.

I WAS hoping there wouldn't be many people in the lobby when I came down with my bundle, but when I got there about fifty in all were hanging around. I would have gone straight back to my room, but two or three people I had recently met saw me. I could feel my face getting hot, as I made my way to the door with the intention of getting out as quickly as possible.

At the *Strathmore*, guests don't carry bundles—particularly bundles of laundry. I was well aware that John would be furious if he found me out. I prayed that he wouldn't; I had figured that with what I saved by carrying the laundry to this new washwoman, I could buy a couple of trifles for my sister Ellen's children.

Things wouldn't have turned out so badly if the mob of nuisances that always hover around hotel entrances hadn't been more obnoxious than usual. I didn't want a taxi and I didn't want a porter, or anyone else to help

I felt a storm coming. My hands were shaking as I took out my sewing. Still, I wasn't prepared for what he actually said, in a perfectly calm, detached way, quite unlike his usual manner when in a temper.

"It's no use, Ruth. We might as well come to an understanding now as any other time. You and I don't seem to get along as well as we did. With all my talking you seem to find a thousand different ways in which to humiliate me. That laundry episode was the result of a new method of saving, I suppose?"

I swallowed hard. There seemed nothing to say.

"Incidentally, you've furnished people here with something to talk about for years," he added grimly. "Every new patron will enjoy a laugh at the expense of the couple whose soiled linen was scattered about the lobby floor.

"There seems to be some things you can't learn.

Probation

*John Walk Out of My Life
Had Never Been a Part of It?"
Myself Finally, and Then—*

Ruth," he went on coldly. "It's a pity, because knowledge has to filter into the human brain somehow. I think, my dear, we had better see less of each other for awhile. Suppose you stay here, and let me move my belongings to the *Empire*. I will send your allowance—a generous one—regularly, the first of every month. If at the end of a year you will have learned to spend money easily, dress decently, be properly served, and give without regretting, let me know. Otherwise—"

He shrugged his shoulders significantly, then wrote out a check, which he left on the desk. As he moved to the door, he paused.

"I want you to understand fully, Ruth, that I love you, and want to come back to you. It's up to you to make or mar our future." He opened the door and walked out without a backward look.

For a long time after my husband left the room I sat on the bed and thought things over. I had been married seven years. Before I became John's wife, my salary as a teacher had fed, clothed, and sheltered a widowed sister, her two children, and an aged mother. Spreading butter thinly and eating meat sparingly were habits that had grown on us.

DURING the first three years with John, after my mother's death, economy had still been necessary. Then he had admired the skill with which, on his meagre salary, I had conducted the household.

But a miracle happened. John invented a machine that proved to be greatly in demand. There was no further need of economy, but still my habit of thrift persisted—and made us very unhappy. Differences and arguments arose, which were quite unknown to us in those first three happy, poverty-stricken years of our marriage.

For instance, odious comparisons were always shaping themselves in my mind. Why, the amount my husband distributed weekly in tips would have paid the rent for Ellen! The sacrifice of just one little attention from the hair-dresser would provide Ellen's children with many necessities. Unconsciously, I found myself avoiding porters with their hands outstretched. I would take a taxi only in a case of the most urgent need. Maids didn't enjoy waiting on me. My dresses were always bought with an eye on the price tag. Money, which brightens the lives of so many, made ours bitter and quarrelsome. I knew John was right, and I had

He took in the situation at a glance . . . I felt a storm coming.

promised him often enough to try to conquer my peculiar vice. But, like the imbibor of the proverbial last drink, I couldn't be restrained from doing it just once more.

And here I had tried it again—with what disastrous results!

I had sense enough to realize that John was too fine a prize not to be seized upon by some woman—good or bad—soon. If he drifted away from me now, even for a much shorter period than a year, he would be gone forever. Could I let him walk out of my life, as if he had never been part of it? In the early part of our marriage, when he had commended my household abilities and thought me the most adorable feminine creature living, I had breathed a nightly prayer of thanksgiving for his love. I still valued it too highly to let some other woman take it away from me.

I walked to the mirror and looked at myself. I had good features, plentiful hair, large, thoughtful eyes—a



note too grave, perhaps. Rich, soft, clinging gowns in delicate shades would change me into a woman to whom John would be glad to return. Because of a little matter of dollars and cents, was I going to allow some other woman to win my John?

Not if I knew it!

Hastily donning my hat and coat, I rushed to the elevator. Just in time I remembered to tip the man a dollar. I flushed at his look of amazement. Instead of the trolley, which I usually patronized, I took a taxi to one of the most exclusive dress-shops in the city. To keep myself in practice, I gave the cabman a dollar.

A few hours later I was the possessor of an outfit that changed me from a little gray hen into a seductively-gowned woman of the world.

The transformation awed, amazed me. I was a different creature entirely. Ten of my thirty years miraculously dropped away from me. I was myself, yet vastly different. I began to feel a contemptuous pity for the poor little ill-dressed thing who had dropped that bag of laundry in the lobby of the hotel. Hats, shoes, stockings, gloves, lingerie, furs, I bought with a prodigal hand. And the woman in me, newly awakened, kept crying for more.

BUT my purse was getting flat. John's generous allowance was quite inadequate, I found, to the new needs of his wife. I gave myself a couple of months in which to grow accustomed to my new clothes, then I sent my husband a note, asking him to meet me in the writing-room of the *Strathmore* at a certain hour a few days hence.

Hidden from sight behind a huge palm, I watched John arrive to keep his appointment. His clever, kindly face was a little stern, I noticed. It was evident that my request for an interview had disturbed him. If I thought to wheedle him into taking me back, his expression seemed to say that I was in for a surprise, by George! He had told me what to expect and I'd have to take my medicine. If I couldn't please him and make it easier for myself at the same time.

My sudden appearance in front of him cut short his reflections. His mouth opened, but no sound came from it as my hand touched his sleeve. It was not remarkable that for a moment he failed to recognize me, for I had been quite astonished with my own reflection in my mirror before I came downstairs. The dress I wore, a softly clinging thing that made me look like a debutante, had cost three hundred dollars. My hat was the achievement of an ambitious and artistic milliner.

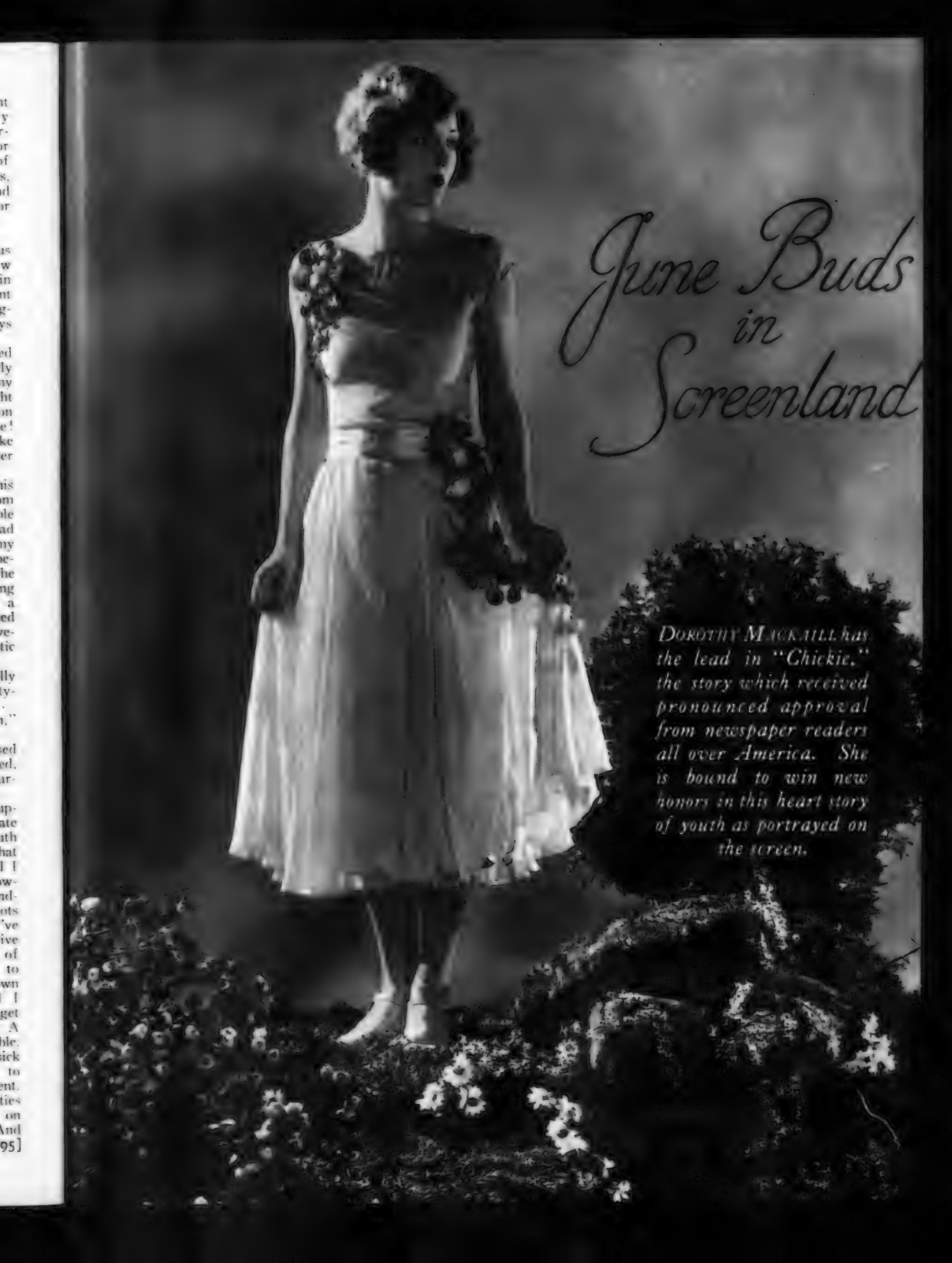
"Hello, John," I said, casually fingering my hundred-and-fifty-dollar vanity case.

"Glad to—to see you, Ruth," said he, looking pretty dazed.

"I supposed you were surprised to hear from me," I remarked, apologetically, as we seated ourselves.

"I know I wasn't supposed to communicate with you, but the truth of the matter is that I'm hard up. I find I can't live on the allowance you've been sending me. There are lots of things of which I've been obliged to deprive myself. A string of pearls, for instance, to go with a new gown I've ordered. And I find it difficult to get along without a car. A taxi is so unreliable. Furthermore, I'm sick of hotels. I'd like to get a little apartment. I've seen some beauties of five or six rooms on Peachtree Road. And [Turn to page 95]

"It's no use, Ruth. We might as well come to an understanding now."



June Buds in Screenland

DOROTHY MACKAILL has the lead in "Chickie," the story which received pronounced approval from newspaper readers all over America. She is bound to win new honors in this heart story of youth as portrayed on the screen.

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95]



MARY EATON, following her stage success in "Kid Boots," has turned to the movies. She will appear in several pretentious pictures during the year.



EDNA MURPHY is playing
opposite Glenn Hunter in
"My Buddy's Wife," T.
Horrara Kelly's pictur-
ization of the powerful
SMART SET story, which is
being produced by Tom
Terriss. This is one of
the finest true stories ever
published. It has received
the highest commendation
from men in the Yankee
New England Division
of the A. E. F., some of
whom knew the man in the
story.



GLADYS WALTON, after a long absence from the screen, is being sought for the leading rôle of a forthcoming production, the title of which has not been made public.

Black Jack



*“—that good old
licorice flavor”*



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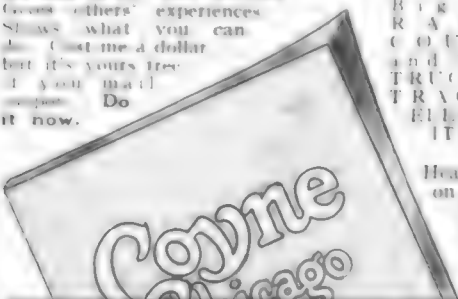
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President

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ELECTRICAL SCHOOL

Dept. 615-A, 1300-10 W. Harrison St., Chicago, Ill.

*I Laughed
Inwardly at
the Fury That
Wind and Sea
Had Suddenly
Unleashed
Against Me.
I Thought
That I Was
Besting Them
At Last—
and Then—*



I remembered a night of twenty years past—coming to our trysting log on such a night.

The Sea Laughed Back

I STAGGERED head-on into the stinging wind and lashing spray of the blow that was striking Pilot Island that night from out of the northeast. I laughed inwardly at the fury that wind and sea had suddenly unleashed against me. Both had threatened me for more than twenty years; they had made me their victim for ten. But "Big Petersen," as I was called, had bested them in the long run. I was besting them now in spite of their last desperate gesture to thwart me.

Rounding Jetty Point, I paused on the beach. Squaring my shoulders, I laughed into the storm. It was mockery, and defiance, and challenge—all forged into one sound!

The sea and the wind had laughed at me ten years ago down in the South Seas. They had sucked my ship into Davey Jones' locker. They had tossed me, raw and red, upon a wild, lonely shore. They had lashed me with the scantling of my wrecked ship and sent me to shore with

a depression of the skull that made me unconscious of my desire for home; that numbed my arms and ears for the touch and sound of blue-eyed Nona; that made me forget the ever-gnawing hunger for the vision of a little girl, playing in sea-washed sand, and the feel of her tiny, fumbling fingers.

And then a medical missionary had accounted for my demented condition, and had operated so as to remove the pressure. Ten years I had been on that island, a—well, what did it matter now? I must go home! I must see Nona!

I had been placed aboard a passing ship, to be dropped off on Pilot Island.

Well, I had paid my toll to the sea. Never again would it claim me. I was through. Big Petersen had bested wind and wave at last! I was going home!

All of the pride in my seafaring blood flared up at the



Her face, misted by the shadows in the room, was uplifted in pleading prayer.

thought of final triumph. Now I was moving southward like a ship running before the wind. Long ago, as a barefooted boy on Pilot Island, I had charted a course from Jetty Point to a pine-board cottage that faced the open sea. I picked up this course now as if moving on the compass, and drove forward with desires for my wife and daughter bursting inside of me.

My ears were shut to the lost soul wail of the wind, and the roar of seething water. The soft voices of women-folks seems to be calling through the angry din. My pulse and pace quickened. Suddenly I broke into a trot and ran with eager feet over the hard sand.

The cottage was still two miles down the damp, surf-lathered beach, smothered in the storm-frenzied dark. But, peering into the gloom like a sailor on watch, I thought that I could see lights gleaming. However, there were no home lights except those that had been gleaming

in my dreams for the past ten years. The dark was deeper than night; thicker than Newfoundland fog.

Still, it was good to delude myself with the belief of lights glowing ahead. It made my dream of going home, at last, seem much more real.

"Another few minutes and Nona'll be in my arms—and little Edith! Oh, God! I couldn't have stood this wanting and wishing another day. It would've snapped something inside of me, same as these northeasters snap the riggin's of good ships. Home . . . my woman . . . my little girl!

I slowed down to avoid tripping over Pilot Island's courting log—that is, if it were still bedded in the white beach. Yes, the log was there; a thick soggy round thing in the dark. I felt it with my foot. The touch was magic. It carried me back to the sweet long ago, sweeping away the years like chaff. Stopping in my tracks, I reached down to touch the log with trembling hands. Heart happiness and torture had often come into my days; but they had always come as separate things. I never knew until this moment that happiness and torture could mix in a man's heart. All my happiness in life, and all the torture that had been mine, leaped to sensitive life as my fingers grazed the log.

I CLOSED my eyes and remembered a night of twenty years past—a night of soft starlight; of drowsy tide murmuring to the shore; of an orange moon climbing out of the Atlantic; of Nona coming to our trysting log on such a night. I trembled with memories of that night. Yes, I had taken Nona in my arms. She had clung with all of her fine young strength; she had cried that her father, old Cap'n Jim Chatwick, insisted I earn mate papers before I could have her. My answer of twenty years ago seemed to echo through the night again.

"I'll get my papers, Nona, afore Pilot Island can say 'Jack Robinson.' Don't cry, sweet; there's not wind or sea enough in all the world to ever keep us apart. I'll ship foreign on that Spanish bark tomorrow. I'll come back and

claim you with papers, sweetheart."

Nona had given me a new kind of kiss for that answer; a kiss that inflamed me as did my first glass of heady wine in Bordeaux. God! Twenty years had failed to cool the fire that kiss kindled.

It was still burning through me as I raised up from the log with the memory dominating my body and soul. The sand dunes, shrouded now in the black storm, shared the story of that kiss. Sloping away in white silence towards the brooding jungle, they had watched Nona and me when we parted, knowing there was a bond between us that neither God nor man could rend asunder the bond of given and taken love.

At the remembrance of all this, I reached through the raging night as if to embrace Nona. I craved such a kiss again with all the strength of my arms. A second later I was plunging through the wind and spray. Still,

my memories persisted. It was sweet now to remember how I had kept my promise to Nona.

I was back with those papers before she knew it. We were married! I'll never forget those first days in the cottage. The sea seemed to know and understand then. It filled our first nights with song. It was all gold and blue like her eyes and hair. . . . Then I shipped away, returning in time to hold her slim brown hands when Edith came. That was my recollection.

An invisible hand was jerking at my heart-strings now. I was back in the dimly lighted cottage room, where, nineteen years ago, my girl-wife went down into the shadows, and came back with a new little life.

The minutes before the shadows lifted! Before a child voice echoed through the cottage room! My own anguished helplessness! These were sounds and things that had been with me the morning my ship was sucked into the Pacific. They would never leave my consciousness.

The sea and the wind had tried to take them from me; had tried to make me forget. But, bah! I had bested them, at last. I was going home to my women-folks; to love and life! It was ten years since my last visit home. But, suddenly, my first ten years of success at sea, and the second ten with their heartbreak story of raw, empty life on a Pacific island, seemed as only yesterday! I moved mechanically toward the light that now blinked faintly through the darkness.

Shaking from head to foot, I reached the steps of my own cottage. A sinking sensation came to the pit of my stomach; a sensation we all experience just before the impending happens. Somehow, I was strangely afraid to rush up the steps and claim my own.

The wind raised its voice at me. The sea swirled in shore around my uncertain feet. I drew back from the foaming water, ashamed of an inexplicable cowardice. As a man will do when frightened, I tried the effect of hearing my own voice. I laughed my mockery of the sea and the wind aloud.

"Bah!" I laughed, my voice whisked into the whirlpool of elements, "I've tricked you; bested you. I'm safe home, damn you both!"

I ran up the steps as easily as I had in my youth. Two steps across the porch and I was at the window, through which filtered a thin stream of light. I could not resist the temptation of a momentary peep before bursting in. Crouching down, and gripping the sill to steady myself in the tearing wind, I looked through the window.

Suddenly I jerked my head back as if I had been unexpectedly struck a murderous blow. Once more I dared a look. A moan came from my lips, and was smothered by the wind. At the same moment a mocking



"Put him on the couch there," she ordered, closing the door to the raging wind.

laugh rang through my body and soul.

The sea and the wind were laughing at me!

Once more they held the trump card, and had played it at the last moment. Once more they had bested me. This time it was for good and all. I sensed this as a captain senses the moment of doom for his storm embattled ship. Something was snapping and breaking inside of me. It was my heart's riggin'!

I STRUGGLED to my feet, half-crazed by the pain of a broken heart. With all my might, I tried to leave the window; an unseen force riveted me to the spot. Again I bent down and peered through the shuttered window. Something within me was still begging for a last proof that my eyes had not deceived me.

My eyes had not lied to me! There was Nona, my wife, her hair still gleaming like gold in the dim, half light of a kerosene lamp, kneeling on the floor beside a baby's crib. Her face, misted by the shadows in the room, was uplifted in pleading prayer. I watched her pray, glancing as she did, from a man's hat and coat on the wall to the south window. [Turn to page 84]



In a taxicab I saw Dick VanderCreek—and a girl.

I Wanted to **Out of My**

What Did
What I
That Other
Just
Made Up

I M NOT making very much now, Margery, but in a few months people will begin to pay up and then——"

"Did I tell you that Aunt Cordelia has asked me to visit her?" I interrupted. I knew that Don was trying in his clumsy fashion to propose and I did not want him to.

The fact that I had longed for this moment for years and years; the fact that I had loved him madly ever since those first months of high school when he carelessly swung my books on his strap as we walked down the maple-lined streets of our home town; the fact that our love was founded on the solid rocks of friendship and long acquaintance—all of these rushed from me as a fast train tears through a town at midnight. I wanted to stop this proposal. I wanted to break in before he really said in so many words that he wanted me to marry him.

Perhaps it was because I felt shy now that the words were already trembling on his lips; maybe I wanted a little longer to enjoy the anticipation of those words. I must be honest enough, though, to tell what I think was the real motive.

Aunt Cordelia had invited me to visit, as I had told Don. That visit! What pictures it awakened in the half-closed eyes of my mind!

Once when I was a tiny girl, Mother and I had visited Aunt Cordelia. The memory of the visit long remained. The grey stone house on the wide Drive. Lake breezes playing softly over the rooms when all

Chicago sweltered in the consuming heat. The black-coated man who opened the iron grill that was across the open doors of fine black English oak. The library walls hung with red leather, where we had wallpaper at home. Fine, soft, deep-piled rugs into which one sank, instead of the Wiltons that we considered rather good in our home. Oh, Aunt Cordelia was wealthy! And now she had asked me to visit her again, this time alone.

Would I find Romance there in Chicago—a dream-lover who would come riding to me in a coach-and-four like the old fairy tales? My thoughts had already run far ahead and Don's tones popped at me like rifle shots.

I HOPE that you'll enjoy yourself, Margery," he said coldly. "Doubtless you'll meet the Duke—perhaps even marry him!" The last words had a touch of bitterness that was entirely unlike Don. But in my excitement I hardly noticed this, although I recalled all of it later.

"Do you think I'll meet the Duke?" I said excitedly. I had read in the papers about the coming of the Duke and how he intended to remain in Chicago for two weeks. Perhaps Aunt Cordelia would entertain him at her home! There was the possibility! My heart fluttered so that when Don said with a yawn, "I guess that I'd better be going home, Marge. Mrs. Tibbits may call me around two or three o'clock in the morning," I hardly flinched. I usually did, when he mentioned night calls.

After he had gone, though, and I had finished my

Marry Class

It Mean?

Saw In

Taxicab

About

My Mind



As I stared, she suddenly melted into his arms.

useless train of thought about Aunt Cordelia and the wonderful house and the Duke—whom I might even marry—for did not such things happen every day, making fact seem stranger than fiction! I again thought about Don. Night calls! Ugh, how I shuddered at the combination of those two words!

FATHER had been the only doctor in the town for years and years. One of the first things I can recall of my early childhood was a rapping at the door, low voices tense with anxiety, Mother hurrying around in soft slippers and a woolly dressing-gown to get Father a hot cup of coffee before the long ride, perhaps one of ten miles out into the open farm country about us. As I grew older I became accustomed to the tinkle of the telephone at night. With the heaviness of youth I slept on, rather annoyed at the interruption of some beautiful dream wherein I was a golden-haired princess instead of a girl with brown hair. Silly? Perhaps. But every normal girl has dreams like this; some day-dream over it and others dream at night.

I had determined that when I married, the man would be some person whose business never called him away at night. Don and I had been in grammar school in those days. I had written his initials and mine. He had not noticed me in those days. Growing boys are shy, especially girl-shy. Don was.

If Father and Mother would only get me the necessary clothes for the visit, I thought, who knows! I might marry a Duke—or at least someone wealthy in

Chicago. I might—well, there was no limit in my dreams.

And that was my reason for going. I confess it freely and openly: I wanted to marry above my station in life.

Aunt Cordelia loved young people. Her house always had seven or eight in it, and once a week or so she gave a dance for them at which there might be a hundred couples. The fact that I was Aunt Cordelia's niece gave me entrée to the group at once. I found myself surrounded by lovely girls whose pictures I had seen in the society columns of the Chicago papers. Men brought me huge boxes and baskets of candies such as were not even carried in the confectionery shop of my home town. Flowers came nearly every morning. The first few days I buried my face in the clusters as I had seen actresses in the movies do, but after a few days had come and gone I glanced at the accompanying cards and, with a scant look at the flowers themselves, rushed away to enjoy myself.

Richard VanderCreek entertained me quite often. Just why, I do not know, since he was popular with the younger set. What he saw in a little small-town girl, whose timid laugh sounded strange amongst the gay trills of the lovely debs and sub-debs, I could not see. Perhaps it was because I said once, when we were driving out along the North Shore, "Do you suppose Auntie will entertain the Duke when he comes to the city?"

How he laughed! Had I not known how to drive a car, and steer with my strong, little, tanned hands, now

crushed in expensive gloves, we might have gone off that little bridge that has such scant protection at the sides. I snatched the wheel and righted the car. Then I saw that he had not even been startled at our close call.

"Mr. VanderCleck!" I said sharply. "You—you almost wrecked us!"

"Well," he said lightly as he stopped laughing. "there's no one I'd rather die with—or live with, for that matter—little Marge-girl!"

I had the same uncomfortable feeling that I was going to be proposed to in a minute. I had the same desire to put off the moment. I knew that in the careless fashion of the set, this itself was almost a proposal. "Do you think the Duke——" I started again.

He laughed. "Why, no, probably not. Mrs. McCorman will probably have that great honour, my dear girl. But why? Don't tell me that you have aspiration to be a duchess? And leave poor little Dickie all alone to mourn his loss of you!"

I smiled. I was bitterly disappointed, though. I had tried a half dozen times to ask Aunt Cordelia, but it was so hard to see her alone. Either the maid was dressing her hair, or at meals there were servants, or else there were guests.

In a sort of daze, I stared at Dick VanderCleck during the rest of the drive. As he pointed out the various buildings in Fort Sheridan, I hardly saw them. I was thinking of him and his possibilities as a husband. Wealthy, I knew he was; good-looking, undoubtedly, blond hair and deep blue eyes, six feet one in height, broad shoulders that supported a neck that looked like a collar-ad, and teeth that a dentifrice-ad could well envy—that was Dick.

In my mind I contrasted him with Don. Don with his brown eyes and dark brown hair. *Slow* Don! Don had never in all of our days got up speed enough to say anything as nice as this Richard VanderCleck had said. When Don and I drove, his remarks generally were: "Meyer's corn is looking good for this time of year," or "Mrs. Benning's youngest child has tonsilitis pretty badly. I've thought some of asking your dad to operate. Do you know how he's fixed for time Wednesday?" Don, the country doctor; Dick, the city—what?

"Dick," I said suddenly, hardly aware that I had used his first name for the first time, "what do you do?"

"Do? I generally do as I please. Why?"

"For a living, I mean? Are you a lawyer or——"

[Turn to page 83]



And when I think how dangerous might have been that interlude, my heart thumps wildly, only to be reassured by Don's gentle, loving glance.

My Last Bachelor NIGHT

*The Things I Could Get
Have Not Interested
Me as Much as the
Things Which Were
Out of My Reach . . .
It Was the Other
Fellow's Spoon That
Looked Like Gold*

YOU were born with a silver spoon in your mouth!" is a proverb I've heard ever since I can remember.

First of all it was my nurse, when I had more toys than I knew what to do with. Then it was boys in school, who envied me because I had everything on earth.

And so it has gone on. But I've never seemed so lucky to myself as I've seemed to outsiders, for the things I could get have not interested me as much as the things out of reach. It has always been the silver spoons belonging to others that have looked like gold to me.

Just because I could make girls care for me, I began to be bored by them, even before I left Harvard. Then the war broke out, and what a fuss women of all ages made over soldiers!

Whatever I did, I wanted to do well, so that I might be admired. I wanted to be the *best* dancer; the *best* rider; the *best* tennis player; the most *showy* driver of a car; up at the *top* in every kind of sport; and, as my relations seem to have done nothing but leave me fortunes ever since I was a small boy, I hadn't much difficulty in doing all this.

When I came home from the war with a decoration, which I won entirely by accident, not because I deserved it, I suppose I had no other object in



If I'd had a faint hope of making her understand, it died the minute I saw her poor, little, happy face.

I realized at first sight that the man wasn't one who could be easily hoodwinked where his wife was concerned.



except getting what little spice out of it I could.

My father and mother were both dead. I'd been left a large old-fashioned house in New York, stuffed with so-called art collections, but to live there wouldn't have suited my book. I sold the place with everything in it except a rarely worn gown or two, and took an apartment in a big new sky scraper.

I STARTED this life as a man about town by having some wild parties, and inviting the most famous stage beauties. I imagined that with their experience they would be less boring than other girls, but I was disappointed in the lot that I met; consequently, I turned back to my own set, but I let young girls alone. I began to specialize in married women.

They were the "golden spoons," you see! They belonged to someone else. Besides, there was a bit of danger in playing with them. That made it more worth while.

For a couple of years I had some hectic flirtations, each one of which kept me wide awake and interested till the moment when the lady would begin to hint vaguely about divorcing her husband. Then I would have a sudden call abroad, or think of some other way

out of the scrape, equally useful; for none of these affairs ever deeply touched my heart. "But some day you'll be punished!" was the prophecy one woman made as we parted forever.

My set was—and is—the last word in up-to-date-ness. Some of our families don't go back very far, but we've all got money and know how to spend it. In an ordinary way, I should never have come across Admiral Westbury and his female belongings if it hadn't been for a little adventure in a train. I was going to Washington for a dance, starting just in time to stroll into the restaurant car for lunch. As I walked in I discovered, already seated, the most intriguing woman I'd ever seen in my life.

YES, "intriguing" is the right word. There was something about her that, even at first glance, makes a man remember he is a man. I pounced on the table nearest hers and sat down where I could face her during the meal.

Both tables were small, for two only; and when the car superintendent breezed up for a polite word, I tipped him five dollars to let me have mine for myself alone. I was afraid that some stout fellow or some fat dame

might block my view. I didn't know what I ordered.

She wasn't alone at her table; otherwise, I should have grabbed the vacant place there. But I was glad that her companion wasn't a man. All I could see of my beauty's neighbor was a very slim, not to say thin, and girlish back. A rim of pale yellow hair was visible under a close fitting, brown hat, and yellow hair has never interested me. I admire it as dark as possible, and my charmer's was glossy black, like the wing of some beautiful bird.

"Whatever she is, it can't be American," I thought, and I wondered about her. Was she French, Italian, Spanish, Russian?

She was perfectly dressed, in smoke grey, trimmed with a shade of fox that matched a pair of wonderful, slightly slanted eyes. These eyes were very long, with lovely white lids, and thick black lashes that looked as if they'd been sketched in ink on her pale cheeks, whenever she looked down. She had a pouting red mouth with a short upper lip. Her nose was delicate and aquiline, and for age, I thought she might be anywhere between twenty-four and twenty-eight.

I TRIED all I could to magnetize her with my eyes, and make her look at me, but one fleeting glance was all she gave me.

I valued her all the more for this indifference to me. I was too much accustomed to "glad eyes" from pretty ladies. I could have finished my lunch and gone before my neighbors at the next table, but I was too intelligent to do that. I let them pass before me, paid my bill, and then followed.

Then I saw that the two were in my Pullman. When I was wondering how to meet her, we developed a hot box and there was a long delay. I heard her asking what had happened. I seized the opportunity to explain, but shouldn't have got much further if it hadn't been for the girl.

I saw at once that the little thing had fallen a victim to what my friends teasingly called my "fatal charm." I had made the "killing" where I hadn't tried to make it! But all the same, I saw that it might be useful. Consequently I gave the child one or two of those long, straight-into-the-eyes looks that were among my successes. I even went so far as to say that I felt sure I'd seen her before. "Where could it have been?" I added.

As soon as the dark beauty saw that the girl was interested, and that I was "playing up" to her, she melted. Then

I was at least allowed to sit down and continue the conversation. Oh, of course, they had heard my name, and seen snapshots of me in the newspapers!

"You are quite a famous person in society," the girl went on, with a blush. We don't go out very much, do we Nadya? Father doesn't encourage us to be frivolous; but we do read about what is done, and who does it."

"Are you by any chance going to the dance at the Legation tonight?" I asked. "That can't come under the category of frivolous."

"No, we're going to visit a relative of my stepmother's, who is ill," the girl announced. "I'm not out yet, but I do love to dance."

A glance at the elder woman informed me that she was the stepmother in question, and I was rather relieved, because the father of a seventeen or eighteen year



"I said the orchids were for my birthday, but the pearls and the note were not for me."

old girl must be at least middle-aged. It wasn't probable that this darkly fascinating though reserved beauty was in love with such a husband; so there was hope for me if I played my cards well in the future. I had determined already that there should be a future.

Seeing that I had no intention of "rushing" her, but was responding to the girl's shy, half-unconscious advances, the lady became more and more human. She allowed me to linger, talking to the girl, and more than once I caught the smoke-grey eyes fixed upon me with a curious thoughtful expression. I wondered if she were as utterly indifferent to me as she seemed, or merely very discreet?

I soon learned, without having to ask questions, who

they were, and incidentally picked up several bits of information about them, dropped by the "sub deb."

The father of one and husband of the other was a retired Admiral, named Westbury. The child seemed to suppose that I must have heard of him, and I gave her to understand that I had. This was naturally a white fib. I wasn't much in the way of hearing Admirals' names, unless some sensational interest was attached to them.

This man had done nothing startling, so far as I could make out from his daughter's chat, except that he had somehow become an authority on Russia, and since retiring had written a book on conditions there. "Nadya" the young stepmother, was a native of that distressful country. The Admiral had helped her to escape, with an

aunt of hers, from great danger. The aunt had lived with them after their marriage, but was now herself married to an American linguist in the State Department at Washington. It was this lady they were on the way to visit, and I gathered that the Admiral had stayed at home. That home was on Staten Island. He had bought a little place after retiring, because he liked "a view with plenty of ships in it."

There I had a tabloid history of the family, and I was fairly well satisfied with my prospects. Though the Westburys were far removed from my set, I could either bring them into mine, or somehow get into theirs. I was determined to do one or the other, for no woman had ever intrigued me half as much as this Russian, Nadya.

I CONTRIVED to meet the two again in Washington. The aunt was better, and Nadya and Molly Westbury couldn't resist accepting invitations which I got for them to the ball of the season.

Back in New York, I made friends at one of the duller clubs in order to meet Admiral Westbury. Old Jimmy Masterson was delighted to ask me down to his place for a week end. That did the trick! I was introduced to the Admiral Westbury, and won his good opinion because of my golf.

I realized at first sight, however, that the man wasn't one who could be easily hoodwinked where his wife was concerned. And he wasn't as ancient as I had hoped. He had retired from the Navy, not on account of age, but because his eyes had troubled him. Now, unexpectedly, they were better—and they were bright, alert, dark eyes, full of fire in spite of his [Turn to page 81]



I wouldn't let her go. There was no one in the moonlit world but the woman, and me.

"Arthur! Ar-thur!"
She had uttered her husband's name as she fell.

So I Went With Him

*Men With Such a Light in Their Eyes Love
a Woman For What They Think She Is*

CHARM was the dominant trait in Arthur Milton. It challenged the most casual passersby. Many persons it enchained. Some for life. He was as one of the generals returning from a campaign who dragged their victims at their chariot wheels.

In my last year at college a captain of industry visited the classes and made short addresses to them. I remember only one statement: "The best way to get on is to associate yourself with a great man, as his secretary. You will be inspired by his example and will learn as much of life and affairs in six months as you have learned here

in four years." He then apologized to our dignified prof.

Believing this, while my diploma still crackled with its newness, I called on the great novelist to ask him to employ me as his secretary. My heart had leaped when a friend said: "You like Arthur Milton's novels. This is your chance to know your hero at first hand. Go up and ask him for a job as secretary. He needs one at least for the summer."

I was awed by the splendor of the skyscraper apartment house built about a wide square of palms, a small forest of them set about a fountain that dripped and

sparkled in the warm sunlight. A man in gray uniform called through a telephone in the hall: "A young person who wants to see Mr. Milton about a secretaryship. She has a card from a friend of hers and of his."

A man servant with a graven face said, "This way, please."

I entered a large, high room, booklined on every wall, with the magnificence of Oriental rugs. At the middle of the room was a huge, flat-topped desk. Before it sat a man. He rose as I entered.

Two glimpses of Arthur Milton in the space of one rushing minute. The first was a white-faced, pre-occupied man, with a sleek brown head bent above a page he was correcting—a frowning, irritable man. The second was a tall figure and an engaging face, with big, dark eyes and full, red lips that smiled; heavy dark eyebrows; a shock of tumbled brown hair that almost curled; the nose slightly rounded; the cheeks full and rounding

over his jaw. He didn't speak at first. I was nervous

"Miss Channing?" he asked. "I am glad to see you. Be seated. No, here. Opposite me. Frank George has written me that you learned shorthand at college. Commendable and not often enough done."

In five minutes I had been engaged. Arthur Milton looked at me still with the smile in his eyes that was so strangely, so searchingly personal that it disturbed my heart beats.

WILL you stay? Thank you. Shall we begin at once?"

With a boyish stride he crossed the space between us and gently lifted my hat from my head. He helped me draw my gloves from my hands, laughing while he did so. "Beg pardon," he laughed while he, perhaps by accident, pressed them.

He walked about the room while he dictated what he

*A moonbeam struck a
rope, & turned face. It
was the face of Miss
Inver.*



called the midchannel chapter of his new novel. "The title of the chapter is 'Appassionata,'" he said.

Back and forth he paced the floor. The words flowed from between his full, red lips. "When John Gleason looked at the girl for the first time he knew he loved her. Love comes swiftly and unbidden to some hearts." He described the heroine. "A tall, arrowlike girl . . . Her cheeks, sun-painted a glorious red . . . Her eyes, brilliant, challenging——"

He paused in his walk and sent me a straight glance from the eyes that still smiled.

"Strange. She is a girl like you," he said. His personal glance! My pulses leaped in answer to it.

He dictated rapidly. The words rushed as a torrent over a precipice.

"Are you tired?" he asked after two hours of dictation.

"Not at all," I answered.

He laughed and rang. "Then you will share my lunch on the desk?"

"Luncheon for two," he said to the butler.

We laughed over our tea and toast and salad. He told me as I poured the tea that my hands were beautiful. "Strong and capable and yet made to caress and be caressed."

The hours that had marched in the morning moved with the grace and swiftness of a waltz in the afternoon.

"Dine with me," he coaxed. When I hesitated he said, "Be kind to an overworked, lonely man. I shall correct this chapter. I revise very slowly. It will take the next hour-and-a-half. Then won't you hear me plan my next chapters at dinner? It helps a fellow to talk out his plot to a lovely listener. I'll expect you."

"I never knew you were vain. Nor silly." I scolded my anxious, palpitant vision in the mirror. It held something unknown to me. The blue eyes were unusually responsive. The cheeks hung flags of scarlet. The lips that trembled a little were deeply red.

"No rouge tonight" I said, and dusted my burning face with a powder fragrant as rose leaves. I wore my most becoming dress, a rose-colored crepe. I took a taxi that my nerves might be calmer and my gown fleckless.

IT WAS dinner for two in a long, stately room. Four tall yellow candles on the table and two on the sideboard combatted the dusk of the dim room. Across the shining dark wood, the squares of white embroidered linen, the sparkling silver, my employer looked at me and smiled with his searching personal gaze. He outlined his book. "Tomorrow we will write the chapter in which he declares his love," he said.

He telephoned for his automobile and drove me home, making a detour to swing through the park. Among its winding roads, in the starlit night, his hand sought



I saw two faces, white in the moonlight, turn toward me. Two figures fell apart. Aunt Agatha laughed.

mine. He lifted it to his lips. I was in a reverie.

It was a summer of magic. The magic of the most charming man in the world, aflame with his work, yet in many resting moments keenly alive to my nearness and what he called "my irresistible beauty."

It was a summer of inspiration. I was taken to the mountaintops and shown all the glory, the splendor, the fire of life.

ONE morning there was an unusual air of bustle and excitement in the high apartment. Even the marble-faced butler seemed in unusual haste. A French maid darted through the hall.

"When the last trunk it come it go at once to Madame's room," she said, and closed the door. But in the instant of the door's opening I had had a glimpse of luxurious womanhood; of white shoulders rising out of an orange peignor; of russet hair shining in the late summer sunlight.

Arthur Milton greeted me with a strained smile. "Shall we begin at once?" he said. "I am afraid this will be a day of many interruptions."

It was. The butler rapped hesitantly and Mr. Milton went to the door for a low-toned conversation. The maid spoke hurried French and departed.

A quick, determined rap and a thin, straight woman followed the rap.

"Sorry to disturb you, Arthur, but Ida wants you to write a cheque for the customs people. Here is the amount."

Frowning, the harassed author said, "Will you be seated while I write it, Aunt Agatha? This is Miss Channing, my secretary." The old woman in gray looked through me. It was as though an iceberg had been granted the gift of vision. Her lips moved silently as though pronouncing my name. "Thanks, my boy." She went noiselessly out of the room.

Arthur Milton's words came slowly that afternoon. At four o'clock he said: "I will ask you to excuse me now. Would you mind coming back this evening after dinner? When this turmoil is over I may be able to do the last chapter justice."

I arrived ten minutes before I was expected, and lingered in the coolness of the court. I took off my hat and sat down beside the fountain. A step. I looked up into the face of my employer. In the silver twilight I saw that it had regained its smile. The personal note was back in his eyes. His strong hands grasped my shoulders. He lifted me from the stone bench. His arms enclasped me. His lips sought mine and fastened upon them in a long kiss.

"Morna, I love you—I love you—I love you."

"Arthur! Ar-r—th-u-r!"

The first time the name was short and distinct, as of surprise. The second, a long wail, as of heartbreak. We sprang apart and looked upward. A woman's form darted from a high window. Her head struck the coping of the fountain. A red stain spread across the orange crepe of a peignor.

Arthur Milton knelt and lifted the inert form. A stricken face lay against his shoulder. She opened her

violet eyes, looked into his. A look of amaze, of unspeakable, unforgettable horror. The eyes closed. The woman shuddered. Stillness.

Men issued from the house and ran from the street. They removed their hats.

"Better lay the body on the flagging, Mr. Milton," said one man. "In these circumstances it is best not to disturb it."

Arthur Milton rose and looked at the crumpled orange across which the stain was spreading. "I understand," he said dully.

The newspapers gave large headlines to the tragic accident that had befallen the famous author. Mrs. Milton had returned from Europe that morning. She complained of feeling the city heat acutely after her ocean voyage. She had spoken of having a headache and gone to her room after dinner to rest before going for a drive. Presumably, while she was sitting at a window seeking the air from the river, she had lost her balance and fallen to her death. She had uttered her husband's name as she fell, and he had sprung to her rescue, but too late to save her.

Mrs. Milton had been her husband's secretary before their marriage. The union was a happy one.

Before the remains were taken to Long Island for burial I called at the apartment. The butler had telephoned that Mr. Milton wished me to copy and sign some letters he had written and mail them that evening. The French maid came out of the great drawing-room. She left the door half open. I saw a long, dark casket. Above its white satin lining I caught the gleam of russet hair. Aunt Agatha stood looking down upon the figure. She must have heard; she looked up and saw me passing. She looked across the body at me. Her old eyes, red rimmed, were now filled with hate.

"She must have seen." My heart, like her eyes, seemed to speak aloud. "She must have seen."

A week after the tragedy Arthur Milton sent for me and we resumed work on his novel. When I had typed it, he revised and I recopied it. With no rest between, he began another.

We seldom referred to the tragedy; never to the scene which the scream and the body hurtling through the air had interrupted. In a month he resumed his lovemaking. On the day after the anniversary of Mrs. Milton's death we were married.

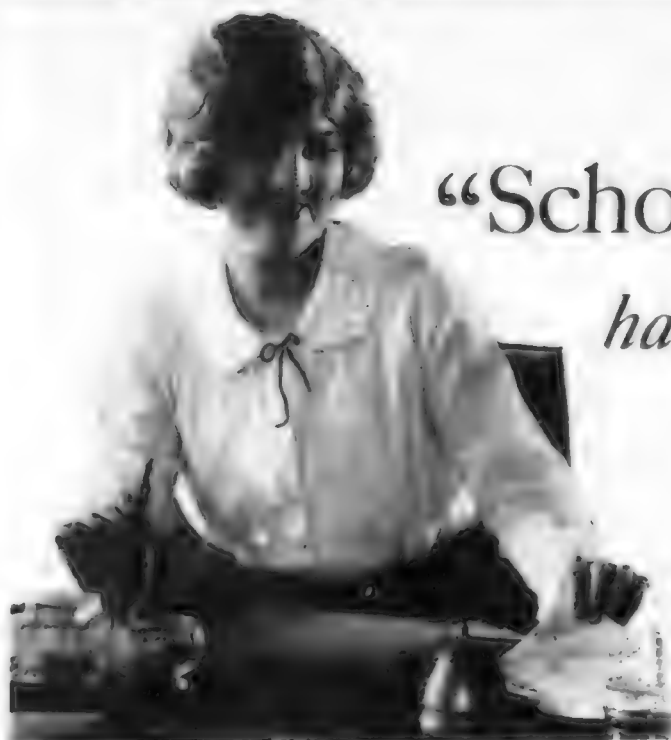
WE WERE vastly, immeasurably happy. In Arthur Milton, as in many creative artists, singers, painters, writers, the ruthlessness of the male was overlaid by the gentleness of the woman. He knew the little courtesies that women crave. Instead of sending me flowers and chocolates he carried them to me. He never forgot to pay me compliments. He called me his inspiration.

When we returned from our bridal tour in Europe, he resumed his work. For months I still took dictation from him. When his last novelette was finished, he said he had grown either tired or lazy. We went to the Adirondacks and tramped through [Turn to page 89]

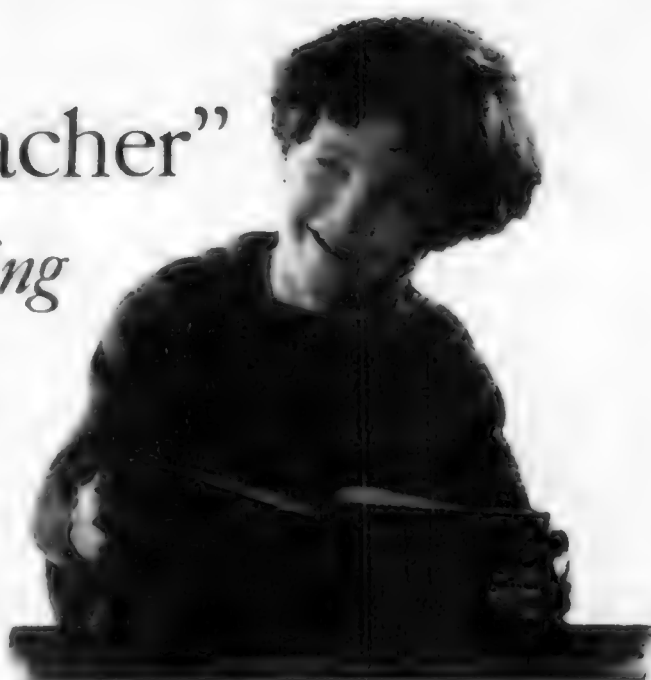
From the window next to mine came the sound of harsh, crackling laughter. I leaned from my window and looked, and saw Aunt Agatha.

"Won't you tell me the joke?" I asked.

She pointed with her gnarled, brown finger toward the moonlit fountain . . .



The
“School-Teacher”
has something
to say
when it
comes to



“The Funniest Story I Know”

THE principal of the school was giving one of his practical lectures. He was warning the children of a crowded district of the city about the workings of a pick-pocket. He turned to a little boy sitting near and said:

“My young fellow, it would be very easy to pick your pocket——”

“No, you couldn’t,” the boy broke in; “I’ve been watching you all along.”

* * * * *

IT WAS a much-dreaded scene when Richard handed his father the monthly report card from the teacher.

“This report is terrible, Richard. Your marks are very low—much lower than I ever made. I’m not at all pleased with it.”

“Yes, sir. I told teacher you wouldn’t like it, but she wouldn’t change it.”

* * * * *

THE composition that the boy wrote on “The Human Anatomy” has always struck me as funny. It read:

“The human man or woman is divided into about three parts which is the head, the chist, and the stummick. The head contains the eyes and the branes if any. The chist contains the lungs and a peace of the liver. The stummick contains the bowels of which there are five— a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes w and y.”

* * * * *

THE only child of a very wealthy family was in his first month of school. So concerned was his mother about his school that she often limousined with her son to the school. On one occasion he jumped out of the car as soon as the chauffeur brought it to a stop. The mother called:

“Bobby, dear, you forgot to kiss Mother.”

“But, Mother, I’m—say, chauffeur, won’t you kiss Mother for me?”

* * * * *

DESCRIBE Pike’s Peak and climate, Willie?”

“It would be very hard to, Miss Higgins.”

AT ONE of the adult negro schools down South, a barefooted ducky was enrolling.

“What is your name?”

“Poe.”

The educated “professor” then got funny.

“Are you related to Edgar Allen Poe?”

“I is Edgar Allen Poe.”

Which reminds me of the illiterate “cullud” man who received a letter at the post office. He turned to another ducky and asked:

“Say, Sam, kin you read writin’?”

“Naw—can’t even read readin’.”

* * * * *

THE teacher had explained that the conjunction was a connecting word, giving several examples, when she asked Thornton to give a sentence with a conjunction and tell what was connected. After some hesitation, Thornton said:

“The goat will butt the boy. ‘Butt’ is a conjunction, connecting the boy and the goat.”

* * * * *

MY GRANDFATHER was in the Civil war, and he got a leg or an arm shot off in nearly every battle he was in.”

“How many battles was he in, David?”

“About forty.”

* * * * *

IT WAS in the history class.

“And why should we celebrate Washington’s birthday more than mine, Stanley?”

“Because he never told a lie.” was the answer.

* * * * *

IT HAPPENED in one of the schools across the tracks. Carlos had been so careless about his appearance that Miss Smith finally sent him home with a note to his mother asking her to have Carlos take a bath and clean up generally. To which the mother answered on the back of the same note:

Dear Teacher: Carlos ain’t a rose. Teach him— don’t smell him.

*Would You
Call This*
A
Foolish
Promise
?



*It Takes Two Stories to Answer This Age-Old
Marriage Question—Is It An Unfair Demand?*

The Problem

AND you promise never to marry another man as long as you live?" came the slowly ebbing voice of my darling husband. I had been with him almost night and day for several weeks, and my whole body was crying out against the terrible strain. My resistance was low and I succumbed.

How like a horrible nightmare I recall that deathbed scene of my darling husband! In order to grant his last few moments on earth a respite from suffering and mental torture, I had promised to remain single as long as I lived. A most unfair demand, perhaps, and one which has been a mooted question since the world began.

Poor Ronald could never bear the thought of my being in another man's arms. He once said: "I'd rather see you dead than the wife of another man!" I firmly believe that he was not prompted by selfishness nor jealousy, but merely by a consuming love for me that forced him to exact such an unjust promise from me.

Several months passed and his meagre insurance was quickly spent. I was compelled to look about for other means of livelihood. Since I possessed a willowy form and was quite a capable dancer, I immediately turned to the stage. There I found very enticing offers, and shortly accepted one which promised great fame.

Gerald Van Dorn knew me in the days when Ronald and I were such inseparable sweethearts. In fact, he had worshiped me at the very time I consented to marry Ronald. He even asked me then if it were not for Ronald, would he have a chance. I had foolishly told him that I loved Ronald better than anything on earth, but that he would have been my second choice.

On the stage I became a most popular dancer, winning my spurs, so to speak, after months of hard work. A dozen wealthy suitors confronted me with tempting offers to grace their palatial homes. Looking into the mirror, I scarcely marvelled at my unique popularity. But always before me appeared the vision of my poor husband, pleading with me to refuse their shallow offers.

But with Gerald it was different. He actually loved me. I am certain now that he loved me with every fibre of his being and would have sacrificed his very life for me. In fact, this was proved a very short time after.

One night Gerald had persuaded me into accepting an invitation to his summer home for a week-end party. After the show closed we got into his wonderful limousine and slipped noiselessly away over the boulevards toward his fine mountain cabin in the Adirondacks. The night was full of romance.

[Turn to page 90]

I Could Look Back and See

Wasted Years

*I Was Surprised to See
Tears In Her
Eyes—She Is Not the
Sort That Cries*

IN SOME ugly, outraged fashion I began to feel intensely jealous of the little salesman by my side. He shared my section on the train and persisted in reading aloud passages of his wife's letter. To my embarrassment I found myself contrasting those tender, intimate phrases with the matter-of-factness of Bernice.

I had been away on legal business for three weeks, but she had failed to mention my return in any one of her three letters. I tried to recall any letter, during our seventeen years of marriage, in which she had mentioned missing me. There must have been some. I had no doubt forgotten. But not a single glowing expression came to my aid. Not one unfinished, faltering sentence.

It annoyed me to find upon reaching home that Bernice was out. Her presence might have cooled my resentment. The house was in its customary four o'clock order. Warm June sunshine rested upon the antiques Bernice had collected. I crossed into the sunroom with its small grand piano, the bowl of white narcissus, and my old Morris chair. Of all the wedding furniture we had selected, only the chair remained. Bernice had removed it once but I had insisted on its return.

"Most comfortable chair in the house," I urged.

I could never have explained that my real affection for the chair was in the memories it held. Memories of a gay Bernice, who used to whirl herself against the paper I was usually reading, to sit enthroned in my arms like a merry, little queen. That had been before Teddy was born.

I had seated myself at the piano when an impatient lark reminded me that I was not, after all, alone. Good

Her face was
as impersonal
as if I were
a peddler be-
fore the door.





door and the door
"I'm surprised to see me, aren't you?"
"You're surprised to see me, aren't you?"

He followed me into the room. Whenever I am worried or blue I seek the piano. Through this medium I am able to convey emotion I have trained myself to conceal. It has been my safety valve for years. I was playing when Bernice returned.

She took time to remove her hat and gloves before she came into the sun-room. Something of my latent resentment must have filtered into the minor harmonies of Grieg's "Voglein," which I lifted into its last mournful twitter before I rose.

"After all," I told myself, ironically, "she is your wife, you know."

I put my arm about her.

"So you're back!"

She lifted cold lips.

"Everything all right?"

"Pretty well, yes! Teddy went away to camp this afternoon."

"You saw him off, did you?"

She was evidently conscious of my implied reproach because she stammered. "I couldn't wait for you. His train left at two, and I had several things to do. The doctor's and some shopping."

"I see."

I wondered if any other wife in the world would have refused to wait one hour. After three weeks!

"I'm sorry to have missed Teddy."

Some hint of smothered emotion

flashed through her reply. If she would only cry! "Yes, it will be a long time until summer is over."

"You love Teddy so much, but Teddy's father could stay away indefinitely, couldn't he, Bernice?"

Her face was as impersonal as if I were a peddler before the door.

"Teddy seems a little baby to me still. I can't get over the feeling that perhaps he isn't old enough."

I was surprised to see tears in her eyes. She is not the sort of woman who cries. God knows I had enough of tears in my gloomy boyhood. Meal after meal with no words between my mother and me. Notling but her subdued sobs! Life gave her a blow, from which she made no effort to recover, by snatching her husband away the week before I was born. At five years I had learned to repress my small woes from "poor Mama." But Bernice was different. I had loved the safety of her nest. She had not even cried the first time Teddy went away to the summer camp for boys.

I PATTED her shoulder, but she stiffened under my hand.

"I've accepted an invitation for dinner tonight." She was drying her eyes. "At the Westgate's. Four tables."

"Oh Lord!"

"You'd rather not go?"

"Well, I just got home, and I'm not keen on bridge with that gang."

"Or any other gang," he added, smiling. "I don't see how we can get out of it now."

"Oh, I'll go, of course!"

She accepted my sacrifice indifferently, as she accepted everything from me.

"You'd better dress then," he said.

While I was bathing I made up my mind to have it out with her. It was astounding that although for years I had been conscious of missing something, I had not realized it was Bernice. She seemed to have wrapped herself in a veil of reserve, which prevented me to see but never touch the warm reality. I determined to tear it away, whatever the cost.

When I entered the bedroom I began:

"Had a funny experience on the train today."

"Yes?"

She was sitting at the dressing table, busy with her hair. Her lifted arms were then her whetted soft. I would have liked to kiss them, to bury my face in the curve of her neck. But I couldn't do it. She was unapproachable. Like a young girl! Only her eyes were not young.

"Yes, I met a traveling man. Queer chap! He insisted on reading me a letter from his wife."

I waited, but she made no comment. I had the feeling of dashing about in a void for words, words which would force her to understand the outcome, that intimacy between the other couple had caused me.

"I was embarrassed, at first."

"You would be, naturally."

My face reddened. I smiled to conceal it, and blurted: "No doubt *there* of whether or not she wanted to see him."

"I suppose not."

She stepped out of her dressing gown, casually, as if her delicate little body could have no appeal for me. I wanted to seize her in my arms. I knew she would not resist me. But the life would vanish from her body the moment I touched her. My hands trembled, but she finished her dressing, undisturbed.

"If they have anything to drink tonight," she added, as she fastened her gown, "I hope you won't be as disapproving as you usually are."

"Am I in the habit of making myself disagreeable?"

"Not exactly disagreeable, but when you're the only one who doesn't touch it, it's rather conspicuous. It's embarrassing to your host, too. You always look sort of holier-than-thou about it. I suppose you don't intend it that way."

"You'd like it better for me to lap it up like Charlie Westgate?"

She took up her gloves.

"Certainly not, Norman! I'd just rather you didn't act quite so virtuous about it, that's all."

"Well, I'll try not offend your friends, Bernice."

I knew I spoke sullenly. But Bernice ignored that, too.

"If you're ready, let's go," she said.

We found the party having hilarious cocktails in the Westgate apartment. Bernice was greeted loudly. Charlie Westgate said, "Hello, Ladd. Suppose you don't care for a little orange blossom?"

"Thanks, I believe I will."

Bernice flushed and Edna Westgate hastened to bridge the chasm of surprise, which gaped with my acceptance.

"We have a new woman for all you jaded men, tonight."

"Who is it, Edna?" Bernice asked, gratefully. "Not much in mine, Charlie."

"A friend of Mary Atkinson's. Does something or other in New York."

I was sipping my iced drink and finding it delicious.

"Very good, indeed," I said to Westgate.

I began to feel more cheerful. I always seemed to have little in common with these people whose lives had been quite different from mine. Bernice enjoyed them but I was apt to feel miserably self-conscious. Yet, I had to admit they were a good sort. They seemed more friendly than usual tonight.

I was roused from my amiable reverie by Mary Atkinson's voice, presenting a woman with a fan. The fan was flame-colored and her voice was, like it, richly alive. She was saying, "And why haven't I met you before?"

I found it easy to reply.

Dinner was served with the traditional Westgate carelessness. But the food was good and I did not mind being excluded from the merry byplay, for Dudley Clark was out of it, too. She asked me to call her Dudley.

"Everyone does," she explained.

I saw Bernice glance occasionally in our direction. I hoped she noticed the slow swept glances above the fan.

"IT'S wonderful," Dudley confided, with the coffee, "to meet someone who is absolutely congenial. Didn't Mary say you played the piano?"

"Mary may have," I admitted. "I'm afraid I'm guilty."

"Will you play for me? One little thing before we leave tonight: I get so hungry for music."

"What shall I play?"

"Let me see. You would love Schumann and Grieg. Am I correct?"

"You've guessed my secret," I answered, meeting her glowing eyes.

I was not given an opportunity to play for her, however. George Atkinson had to make a train and the party was broken up abruptly with his departure. Dudley made a little gesture of disappointment as she said good-night.

"Some other time, then. I do want to hear you."

Bernice heard that. She looked at the other woman curiously. But if I had hoped for any exhibition of jealousy I was disappointed.

"Mary's friend seems like a nice little thing," she remarked. "Rather quiet for her here, I imagine."

I had not paid such marked attention to anyone since we were married. Nothing could have more clearly indicated her utter indifference. I relapsed into silence. The situation was more hopeless than I had dreamed.

When we reached home she went upstairs.

"I'm dreadfully tired. Will you be up soon?"

"After a little!"

I sat in the sun-room in the dark. Bernice had been lost to me all these years. I had been holding her gay, little image in my heart while in my arms was a strange woman. Her dutiful acceptance of everything expected of a wife had deceived me. But it was a spiritless performance.

It was no flesh and blood woman; it was a pale ghost, who posed in the garments of my wife. I would never be able to touch her. There was no longer anything living to touch.

I WISHED then, passionately, that I might never have seen the other man's letter. The cruelty of the disillusion was so much harder than the dim dissatisfaction I had previously endured. But my eyes were open now. Nothing to do but face the truth. The Bernice I had loved was dead; I would make no further attempt to reach her.

After a long time I went to bed.

I woke the next morning with a headache. Bernice was evidently dressed and downstairs. A travelling bag was on a chair. I thought at first it must be mine, then I saw that it was filled with her clothes. Perhaps she had decided to go away. I told myself that even so, I could

She seemed to have wrapped herself in a veil of reserve.



and he suffered there. I was so afraid with you. But I was wrong.

"When I had finished my breakfast, Bernice said, 'Norman, I've something to tell you. I suppose I should have told you last night.'

"So you're going.

"What do you mean? You're going to the hospital. I have to have an operation."

"An operation."

"Yes. Something has been wrong for some time, but I didn't realize it was serious."

"What do you mean, serious?"

"She answered directly, 'Oh, a matter of life or death. There's no growth. They aren't sure just what kind of operation to the hospital this afternoon and they will operate tomorrow. It will probably be expensive.'"

"The expense of it seemed to concern her most."

"But when we were to meet things here at home, I'd rather you waited awhile, but Dr. Bradford and the standing he recommended think I shouldn't wait."

"But Bernice, why didn't you tell me you were suffering?"

"I haven't been much."

"I don't see how you could go out to dinner last night and keep it from me."

"But why shouldn't I? There was no use making a fuss about it. I didn't intend to go until today. Now if you think you'll be able to arrange about the financial end of it."

"Don't mention that part of it, Bernice."

My voice trembled far away. Helplessness swept at me. I remembered, as if it were yesterday, the agony

I had endured when Teddy was born. With what desperation I had forced my ragged nerves into control. My poor little suffering girl. The thought of a hospital terrified me. They had tossed her up, like a bag, upon a cart, and wheeled her away from me. God, the torture of peering up and down that ghostly corridor! The silence was worse than screams.

The room revolved about me. I could not see Bernice. I was sinking into a hideously familiar dream. . . . Then, as if it were someone else, I heard sobs. . . . Ardent sobs that quivered at my throat, like heart, and tore themselves loose.

"Norman! Norman, you're crying. . . ."

THE RE was something frightening in her accusation. "Are you crying about me?"

Like the child I had never been permitted to be, I reached for her.

"I can't stand for you to go through that hell without me."

I lifted my head and the torrent of my passion poured through the room.

"It will be like it was when Teddy was born. I'd rather be than have you go through that again. Those doctors—no feeling, no—oh, I can't stand."

"Oh, Norman, you care like that."

"Care? Why did you think I've never wanted any more children?"

"I don't know. I thought. . . ."

"No child in the world could be the flaming thing in my heart that you are."

Too late I remembered her indifference to my affection. For the first time since our marriage, I had made a sentimental idiot of myself. I, who prided myself on my control!

To think that all Teddy's life I've held that against you."

"What do you mean, Bernice?"

"Oh," she sobbed out, "why couldn't you have shown me at the time how you felt? I thought you resented my appearance—that you were annoyed at my weakness. . . . But never that it hurt you, Norman."

"I had no business letting you know how much it hurt. What sort of man would you have thought me if I had told you of my suffering?"

"I'd have adored you for it," she answered sadly.

"These long wasted years?"

"Have you been unhappy, too?"

"Unhappy? I was so miserable at first it was like something alive gnawing out my heart. Then I managed to become indifferent so as not to feel at all. You see,

Norman, before we were married your reserve

[Turn to page 86]



"You see, Norman, before we were married your reserve appealed to me. I imagined it concealed a deep tenderness."



Powder

SHOULD REVEAL NOT MASK YOUR BEAUTY

What every woman seeks in complexion powder is the *natural* effect of her own soft, true skin beauty—*revealed*. Not cold, mask-like artificiality. The proper use of the right powder means a natural, not a powdery, result.

Imagine, then, a powder possessing in the highest degree all the eagerly sought-for, *hoped-for* qualities—fine as star-dust; of cloud-like softness; of amazing, even *waterproof* adherence; and having, in addition, the undreamed-of factor of constantly improving the skin texture.

How the Almond Base in Princess Pat Powder not only lends new beauty to the complexion but actually gives a new softness to the texture of your skin.

Is your powdering a succession of lost opportunities? Powder, of all beauty requisites, is the most universally used, and by far the most *often* used, too. Your tiny pores, dutifully performing nature's task, are constantly exuding perspiration, oils and acids over the surface of your skin.

How many times a day comes out your powder puff for a deft sweep of cheeks and neck, nose and forehead, to remove the shine left by these secretions, and swiftly to transform the hard, unlovely gleam to flower-like softness.

You have no time or opportunity on these occasions to use the solvent and mollifying creams that remove the impurities the pores cast forth. Powder is your one reliance. Make sure, then, that the powder you use is a beneficent one.

Princess Pat Powder, the only powder with an almond base, makes every one of these numerous occasions an *opportunity* for actually benefiting as well as beautifying your skin—in its prevention of skin dryness, which so often leads to coarse pores and other blemishes; in its soothing, softening, refining action and its whitening effect on the skin's own texture — *aiding*, not obstructing, nature.

Princess Pat Powder does these things because it is a signal advance in the art of aiding beauty—a *new* powder, with *new* attributes.

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For centuries the better powders have virtually all been made on a rice base.

It took a woman's intuitive beauty sense to depart from the beaten path and use almond as a base for powder—almond, the one ingredient of all most beneficial to the skin and widely used by famous beauty specialists in creams and lotions, but never before applied to powder.

We want you to experience entirely at our expense the caress of this different powder; we want your skin, under its touch, to reveal to you how soft and velvety it can be—and how *much more* lovely it will grow from day to day as you continue its use.

"OLDE IVORY"

*the new shade in powder—
another Princess Pat triumph*

In seeking to create a new shade in complexion powder that should blend so perfectly with the skin as to seem in truth a part of it, Olde Ivory, a soft pastel shade between "flesh" and "brunette," was finally devised. In order to be certain of its almost universal becomingness on all complexion types from bright blonde to deep brunette, we asked 5000 women to try it. The result was even beyond our fondest hopes—for the overwhelming majority acclaimed Olde Ivory as the long sought-for universal shade by day or night. Among 5000 women are all types of skins—*your* type.

Free—this demonstration packet

containing a liberal sample of Princess Pat Powder, the only powder with an almond base. Check your favorite shade when you

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Please send me entirely FREE a sample of Princess Pat, "The Only Powder With an Almond Base." I am checking here the shade I desire:

FLESH—Dainty, youthful pink
WHITE—Pure, snowy white
OLDE IVORY—Natural, ivory flesh
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1109 M. J. Griffin, J. S. Griffin, A. J. Whitham, J. S. Griffin, J. S. Griffin, J. S. Griffin



Just a few drops

Apply a few drops of the liquid to the hair and comb through. The hair will be straight and smooth in 20 minutes.

And in 20 minutes

The hair will be curly and beautiful. The liquid is the secret of the transformation.



Marvelous New Spanish Liquid Makes any hair beautifully curly in 20 minutes

The Spanish Beggar's Priceless Gift

FROM the day we started to school, Charity Winthrop and I were called the "Spanish Beggar's Gift."

Our mothers discovered of us. Our hair was straight and smooth.

At we grew older, our hair became curly and beautiful. The liquid was the secret of the transformation.

A party of friends came to see us. They were all amazed at our hair.

How did you do it? I asked. I told them the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

My mother was a Spanish girl and she had a secret. She told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

After the war, I went to live in a home. I found the liquid and used it. My hair became curly and beautiful.

Or even, you have received the liquid. Charity Winthrop told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

It had been a long time since I had used the liquid. I found it in a box.

Oh, what a wonderful gift! I thought. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

Charity told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift. I found it in a box.

One thing is certain. I found it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.



Madrid, the home of the Spanish Beggar's Gift. I always found it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

The day before I left Madrid I stopped to bid my friends good-bye. I pressed a gold coin in his palm.

"Hija mia," he said, "You have been very kind to an old man. Digamelo (tell me) senorita, what is your secret?"

I laughed at the idea, then said jokingly, "My hair is straight and dull. I would like it curly and beautiful."

He smiled and said, "My hair is curly and beautiful. I found it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful."

A party of friends came to see us. They were all amazed at our hair.

How did you do it? I asked. I told them the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

My mother was a Spanish girl and she had a secret. She told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

After the war, I went to live in a home. I found the liquid and used it. My hair became curly and beautiful.

Or even, you have received the liquid. Charity Winthrop told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

It had been a long time since I had used the liquid. I found it in a box.

Oh, what a wonderful gift! I thought. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

Charity told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift. I found it in a box.

One thing is certain. I found it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

Now, the liquid is the secret of the transformation. You can find it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

The day before I left Madrid I stopped to bid my friends good-bye. I pressed a gold coin in his palm.

"Hija mia," he said, "You have been very kind to an old man. Digamelo (tell me) senorita, what is your secret?"

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He smiled and said, "My hair is curly and beautiful. I found it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful."

A party of friends came to see us. They were all amazed at our hair.

How did you do it? I asked. I told them the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

My mother was a Spanish girl and she had a secret. She told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

After the war, I went to live in a home. I found the liquid and used it. My hair became curly and beautiful.

Or even, you have received the liquid. Charity Winthrop told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift.

It had been a long time since I had used the liquid. I found it in a box.

Oh, what a wonderful gift! I thought. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

Charity told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift. I found it in a box.

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Wave-Sta is the secret of the transformation. You can find it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful.

The day before I left Madrid I stopped to bid my friends good-bye. I pressed a gold coin in his palm.

"Hija mia," he said, "You have been very kind to an old man. Digamelo (tell me) senorita, what is your secret?"

I laughed at the idea, then said jokingly, "My hair is straight and dull. I would like it curly and beautiful."

He smiled and said, "My hair is curly and beautiful. I found it in a box. I used it and my hair became curly and beautiful."

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Charity told me the story of the Spanish Beggar's Gift. I found it in a box.

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The day before I left Madrid I stopped to bid my friends good-bye. I pressed a gold coin in his palm.

"Hija mia," he said, "You have been very kind to an old man. Digamelo (tell me) senorita, what is your secret?"

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What kindness there was in the world, I thought as I lay there in the peace of the hospital. There was my neighbor, Mr. Street, and here were these good sisters. I closed my eyes and thanked God for my blessings. And the children in a good time.

My baby was a darling. I thought she looked like Silvio. What a precious little bundle she was. And how I counted the hours until the sister would bring her to me to nurse. How sweet it was to feel her soft little body close to mine and, as I fed her, feel her tiny finger clasping mine. These were happy times, I can tell you.

When everything seems to go wrong, it seems that there is usually a bright spot to help you go on.

This was my bright spot those days in the hospital, with my baby and the sweet sisters.

And even Street came to see me and brought me some flowers and asked to see the baby. Imagine a young man having such consideration as that—and such a busy young man.

"Why, Senora," said he, "I would hardly know you," and his eyes softened as he looked at me. "You look so well."

The truth of the matter was that I was groomed, and my hair was carefully brushed. My poor body had had some care. No wonder he didn't know me after the way I looked when he first saw me.

"Don't forget now," he said; "if there is anything I can ever do for you, come to me. We like to take care of the families of our members—especially Italian." And he laughed and showed his glittering white teeth which looked even whiter against his inky black mustache. He had on even a brighter red necktie that day.

Then the sister came to me. I knew there was something serious to be spoken at. I felt it before she came to my bed.

She took my hand and sat on a low chair by the bed.

"My daughter," she commenced. Then she stopped.

What was it? Was the baby sick? Oh, no. I'd only nursed her an hour before; she couldn't be. Was it something about little Silvio or Maria?

I waited.

"Yes, Sister," I said, trying to help her tell me whatever it was.

"My daughter," she started again. "The Mother Superior and I have been talking your case over and trying to think what was best for you."

"Yes, Sister," I gulped, realizing that I was fast growing stronger and that soon I would be battling again with life—with another little soul hurled into the maelstrom.

"Would you consider—?"

"Consider what?" I wondered.

"It's like this," continued the sister feebly.

"You have your two children. They can remain in the Home for a time, but eventually you will be required to pay something for their support."

"Naturally, I want to," I eagerly replied.

"And you will not be strong for some time. You must be careful of your health from now on so that you will be fit to work. You could not go back to the conditions from which you came. You have not the reserve to withstand it."

"I see," I said.

"And then this new little one," she almost whispered those words—for she loved my baby. Nurses become very much attached to the babies which they care for. Often the wrench is terrible when they leave them. This sister loved my baby. They all did. She was the pet. They used to quarrel jokingly among themselves as to which one should bathe her. What a little angel she was—and so pretty and good.

"Yes, my baby will need all my strength," I smiled.

"Mrs. Guidi," blurted out the nurse helplessly, "there has just come an excellent opportunity for you to give your baby for adoption into a very fine family—a childless couple, a couple of means—who would do everything for her. They want a girl baby."

"Oh, no, no—no!" I gasped and covered my ears with my clenched hands.

"DON'T upset yourself, Mrs. Guidi," said the sister soothingly. "Wait a moment and think clearly." I choked.

"I know. I'll try." I collected myself and said:

"Advise me, Sister."

"This is the case, Mrs. Guidi. You are alone. There is no one you can turn to. You have three children. That is a great burden. Now these people are the kind who would give your baby every possible advantage. It is a great chance for your child."

"But I could see her?"

"They want a child only for complete adoption—with the parent's relinquishment of all claim."

I couldn't speak. But my thoughts were tumbling over each other in my bewildered brain. Then suddenly I began to think clearly. No poverty, no pain. Education. Comfort. Refinement. Good home.

"I'll do it," came from my mouth before I could stop it.

God had thought for me and for my daughter.

"When will she go?" I asked.

"Today," tremblingly replied the sister with a choke in her voice which almost robbed me of my courage.

"Very well," I whispered. I felt that if it were put off I would weaken, and my daughter's chance for a proper upbringing would be lost.

"They know all about you, Mrs. Guidi, and are most anxious to finish up the arrangements. All you will have to do is to sign a paper." How simple it sounded. My heart was breaking. That numbness was coming over me—that same numbness which I felt when they sent word that Silvio was dying. It was another death to me.

They brought my baby for the last time for me to nurse. I held her to my breast and looked at her. I was trying to imprint indelibly her dear little face on my heart so that I could always remember every detail of her exquisite tiny features.

Her soft little hand gripped my little finger. I felt her soft breath on my skin. I smoothed her baby hair back, and then kissed those dear little feet for the last time. She sighed and fell asleep on my breast.

I closed my eyes. The sister took her away.

[To be continued]

Two more gripping instalments bring this real human story to a surprising conclusion. Its interest lies in its reality. Maria lived it before she wrote it—and now you and I can live it again with her.

My Last Bachelor Night

(Continued from page 66)

fifty years. He had very black brows that almost met across his Roman nose, and his thick hair was only iron grey. I prided myself on my figure, but Westbury's was nearly as slim and straight. It occurred to me that possibly Nadya might even have married him for love instead of gratitude after all, and I studied my ground carefully.

To do this, I had to go on pretending that I was attracted by little pink and white Molly—a nice girl, but of the type that interests me least. She and her father were great friends. She must have said nice things to him about me, for he didn't seem displeased at my plans to see more of the family.

BEFORE I had known the Westburys long, I discovered that Nadya always made her husband the first consideration in her life. But why did she do this? Was she so supremely grateful to him for rescuing her from whatever perils had threatened her in Russia? Was she silly enough to care deeply for a man old enough to be her father? Was she acting from a cold sense of duty? Or was she simply afraid of the man? Sometimes I believed one thing, sometimes another. But the mystery of Nadya's soul, which I could never fathom, gave her a power over me which no woman had ever had.

After several months of doubt I determined that I must find out the truth of her, and what, if anything, was in her heart for me, as the suspense was growing unbearable.

I gave a big dinner in a fantastic African room up on the roof of a new hotel. I asked enough people so that what anyone did would hardly be noticed by others. We all danced except Westbury and a middle-aged but good-looking and clever woman artist whom I'd asked especially to keep him quiet. I started off with Molly for his benefit, but the second time I rose from the table it was to dance with Nadya.

An old and exquisite Viennese waltz was being played. If a woman had red blood in her veins, it would be roused by the sensuous throbbing of such music as that, while held in the arms of a man who could dance and guide as I could. Dancing well, better than other men dance, was one of my stocks in trade. But I was no longer at the moment trying to make an impression. I was only feeling—feeling. We were far away from our own table now. Westbury couldn't see us. I looked and looked at the beautiful downcast eyes till I forced them to look up at me. Then a flame shot through me at what I saw. *She cared!*

It was May. The long windows were all wide open. I took her out on the roof itself, faintly lit by lamps in blue globes, that turned the full moon rising orange-yellow in a purple sky.

"I daren't stay more than five minutes," Nadya said. "My husband—"

"Then let's make the most of the five minutes!" I cut her short.

I told her how I loved her, and my heart almost burst with a wild joy when she confessed that she had felt attracted by me ever since that first day in the train. "I wouldn't let you see it then, or later," she explained quickly, "because—for one thing—there's my husband; for another, I realized that you're the sort of man who wants a woman more if he thinks she's indifferent. I've always been pretending—but it's been a wonderful game! Now—now it's more serious. I can't play anymore. But don't make a mistake. I'm in love with you—dreadfully in love with you! I think of you by day and dream of you by night. But it's not going to end in the way you

think it is. There! the five minutes are up. We must go in at once—at once!"

I wouldn't let her go. There was no one in that moonlit world but the woman and me. I made her kiss me, though she struggled, and even then I would have kept her, but she tore herself free. She almost ran back into the brightly lighted room, and I had to follow.

The musicians had just begun a second encore, so we danced again. Neither Westbury nor I think—anyone else knew we had been out on the roof alone. That was lucky for her, Nadya said. Her husband was very jealous. He would never allow us to be together after that, even in the most open, innocent way, if he had the slightest suspicion.

"We must make a catspaw of poor, dear little Molly," she suggested.

Naturally, that encouraged me. That a "catspaw" should be needed implied that there would be a few hot chestnuts for the said catspaw to snatch out of the fire for us!

But time went on; I made myself intimate at Admiral Westbury's house. I visited Masterson. I persuaded Westbury to come and bring Nadya and Molly to a small house party of mine in a cottage at Newport, which I persuaded friends to "lend" me—for the consideration of a cheque which ran into high figures. And yet I had got nothing from Nadya except many wonderful glances that thrilled every nerve in my body, a few sweet embraces in a dance when no one saw, and now and then a stolen kiss.

I didn't lose hope, however, for I remembered the words Nadya had let drop. "I realized that you're the sort of man who wants a woman more if he thinks she's indifferent."

She was still playing with me, I thought, though she had said once that the game had become serious. By and by it would get beyond control. She would give herself to me! We would go off together! Westbury would be forced to divorce her! We would be married—I had never even wanted to marry and my position in society would soon regulate everything for us both. There were plenty of such affairs in these days, and nobody cared, except the prudens.

THINGS went along better during the Newport visit than they had gone before. That is, Nadya let me give her a ring, which she said she would be able to wear because she could easily make Westbury believe the emerald a "doublet," and the diamonds false. She promised, too, that if I gave her a rope of pearls she could account for them in the same way. "He will think I'm silly to wear imitation things, but he won't object," she told me. "He knows I adore pearls, and he can't afford to buy me any. You can make me a present of a string, if you want to so much, on my birthday."

Her birthday came in October. The Westburys were back at their house on Staten Island then, and I got the useful Masterson to invite me to his place for a few days. I brought the pearls with me, in a case worthy of them. There were just one hundred of the creamy, glistening things, the largest almost as big as a small filbert. Nadya had asked for the case. I would have taken more precautions, if left to my own devices, and would have slipped the pearls into her vanity bag when a chance came, or found some other way as safe. But she wanted the case, with the famous name of a world-known jeweler on it, and she thought if I hid the thing in a basket of flowers sent to her room,



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there would be little or no danger. Her room was her own, she explained. Her husband had one adjoining.

The flowers I chose were orchids. If I had selected some less rare and expensive flower, perhaps everything might have turned out another way. But no. Not if I am to believe my own instinct and a hunch theory put into my head by Molly.

I thought things over and decided that the best time for Nadya to receive my gift was about nine o'clock in the morning. She had told me that she always breakfasted in her bedroom at that hour, and that she and her husband seldom met in the morning till she was dressed and down stairs. He had eagerly taken to gardening since his retirement, and was often out looking after his roses as early as seven o'clock.

THE orchids were in magnificent condition, though they had come in their gilded basket last night. There were four dozen of them, white, and glorious shades of purple and orange bronze. I thought they suited Nadya. They were as strange, and exotic, and mysterious, as she was.

I carried the basket to the door myself, for I wouldn't trust anyone else; and the Admiral was sure to be in the garden this one day.

"For Mrs. Westbury—it's her birthday, you know," was my account to the colored maid who answered the bell. "Will you please take it to her immediately?"

I was sure that she wouldn't guess what lay hidden in the bottom of the basket under the orchids. But Nadya would guess. She would take out the case, open it, see the pearls and the words I had written on a visiting card:

Dearest:

This is the best time I can think of to make you believe in my love. You are the fairest pearl of all.

Then she would no doubt lock the Tiffany case safely away somewhere and gaily pretend that the pearls were false according to plan!

I went back to Masterson's and to breakfast, but I had not finished my coffee when I was called to the telephone.

Nadya was speaking. "Is that you? . . . Oh, the most dreadful thing has happened! My husband suddenly remembered that it was my birthday and burst into my room a minute after your orchids arrived. I hadn't had time to touch the basket. I suppose you didn't know he was wild over orchids? Well, he is. He lifted some of them out, to look at more closely, and—he found the jewel-case. Yes, it was wrapped in tissue paper, I know! But the feel of it told him what it was. Instantly, he suspected. I couldn't stop him. He tore off the paper and opened the case. He read what you wrote on your card—read it aloud. Oh, I think he would have killed me! and rushed out to shoot you, if I hadn't told him a lie that sprang into my head, to save me! . . . I said the orchids were for my birthday. Yes; you told me you were going to send them, but the pearls and the note were not for me. They were for Molly. You had made me promise to give them to her, and plead for you, because you thought she was angry with you about something lately.

"He didn't believe me, at first, and roared to Molly to come. He thought if I'd lied, Molly would give me away. But the silly child is so dead in love with you, and has been so miserable because she was afraid you didn't care, that she swallowed the story as a fish swallows a mayfly. She cried with joy, and kissed the card and the pearls. My husband begged my forgiveness, and now he's got Molly in the library, talking to her. But don't worry. The danger is over, if only you'll play up."

"I'll do anything you tell me to do," I answered, thankful that Nadya had been so quick-witted, but hoping that my wonderful pearls could be redeemed and somehow handed over to their rightful owner, before long. "You must think of a way for me to get out of the mess. Perhaps you have thought of one already."

"Only what I've just told you. Don't you understand?"

"What do you mean, Nadya?"

"Why, I said you'd have to play up—ask Molly to marry you."

"Good heavens! But what if she should accept?"

"She will! You must go through with it. Don't you love me enough to do that—if it's to save my life?"

"If it's the only way, of course. But there must be some other. I—"

"I daren't talk any longer. Any minute he may come now. He will probably call on you this morning. If you love me, you won't fail me now. There! I hear Molly singing in the hall. Good-by!"

I was dazed! My life was shattered! How could I escape this! I couldn't: I had to stand by Nadya.

It seemed too bad to be true that I should be called upon to "make good" with Molly. But nothing was to be spared me. Westbury did call, as Nadya had warned me that he might. He questioned me, not knowing that I had learned from his wife what had happened, and I "played up" as I had promised Nadya I would.

If the man had had any lingering suspicion left, his chat with me chased it away. He would like nothing better, he confessed, than to have his little daughter marry a man of my standing and means. At first he thought that Molly had been my reason for wishing to make the family's acquaintance, but lately he had not been quite so sure. He was delighted not to have been mistaken in his early impression. And now, as everything was all right, would I like to walk back with him and see Molly? Of course, she could accept my pearls only as a betrothal present.

Then my scene with Molly! If I'd had a faint hope of making her understand, and inducing her to refuse me, it died the minute I saw her poor, little, happy face.

"Oh, my dear, my dear, I've loved you so!" she sobbed in my arms, when her father had left us alone. "What made you think I was angry? I was only miserable, because I thought, even if you'd liked me a little at first, you'd stopped caring and got fascinated with Nadya. I knew there could be no happiness for you there, for she's heart and soul devoted to Father. She's afraid of him, but she loves him in spite of that—or because of it. When we are—married, they will go and travel all over Europe for a year or so. They've planned to do that, whenever I should have a home of my own. You see, they had no honeymoon when they married at the end of the war. I believe poor Nadya was glad to get me off at any price!"

At any price, indeed!

I AM going to marry Molly. The wedding is to be tomorrow. This is my last bachelor night . . . She is a nice little girl, and it would have been impossible for me, after that talk of ours, to break her heart by telling her the truth, even if I hadn't been bound to "play up" for Nadya's sake.

Nadya's sake!

I would give a great deal to know whether it was all a game on her part, and whether she played it throughout to get Molly off her hands. I shall never be certain.

There's only one thing of which I am sure. It is, that through Nadya Westbury a dozen women who wanted me "punished," have most assuredly had their revenge.

Out of My Class

[Continued from page 62]

"Oh," he said with a grin that displayed all of his wonderful teeth. "I—well, the truth is, I don't do much of anything. I've thought some of—of writing, but it's a tedious game, figuring out plots and all of that."

To my small-town mind this lack of occupation was appalling. "Do you mean that you—have no business?" I said, aghast.

HE NODDED. "I only finished my engineering course two years ago, girl. Give a fellow time to play about a bit before he settles down!"

"But why study engineering if you didn't intend to use it?"

"Don't worry your mind about such things. Let's go in here and get a chicken dinner. The chicks are probably cold storage, but they're good at that!"

I found myself wishing, as we waited for the meal to be served, that he would touch me, kiss me, put his hand over mine the way men did in the movies when they visited such tea-rooms along automobile routes. But he did not. Perhaps that was why I wanted him to. But again my thoughts turned to the Duke, due now in a few days.

When the Duke came he was entertained by Mrs. McGorman in her mansion not far from us on the Drive. We met him twice. I would like to say that he asked to meet me especially, and danced with me a half-dozen times much to the envy of the other girls, but he did not. To my chagrin, I must admit that when we were introduced his eyes only met mine with a bored but civil glance and he continued a conversation that he had been having but a moment before with Mr. McGorman. He danced only with members of his own party, except for the McGorman daughter—a courtesy dance, everyone called it. The second time I met him he smiled:

"We've met before? I remember that pendant you're wearing." His smile was very pleasant and heart-warming, but what girl wants to be remembered because of a pendant? Had he said he remembered my eyes, my heart would have thrilled, but the pendant! It was one Don had given me for Christmas, and although the girls in the set were not wearing pendants of this kind, I wore it—why? Perhaps because it seemed a brief contact with home things; I can't say.

Richard VanderCleck was highly delighted, however, because of even that much notice. "You've a way with you," he said to me as we danced together. "The Duke—why, he's so girl-shy—frightfully. They chase him so much that he's bored, you know, and pretty nearly hates girls."

A few nights later Aunt Cordelia was on the committee at the South Shore Club a few miles from the city. The affair was a charity event that was arranged in the form of a board-walk with booths dotted here and there. We had stayed late, and drove downtown along Michigan Boulevard when there was but little traffic. At Adams Street, there by the Art Institute, we paused at the flashing-on of the red stop signal and waited in the second line of cars. In the first line, those which wish to turn off the Boulevard, there were already a half-dozen cars waiting. At the red signal they moved forward slowly, and in a taxicab I saw Dick VanderCleck—and a girl. A pretty enough girl she was, in a cheap and flashy fashion. As I stared, she suddenly melted into his arms and his lips were on hers in a kiss so fervid and passionate that I turned my eyes away as though I should not intrude on so intimate a scene.

Then I realized that anyone in any passing car might see and I looked again. At that instant Dick glanced up and caught my eye. Then his eyes dropped. I looked at Aunt Cordelia to see whether or not she had seen the little pantomime. But she was half-dozing in her right-hand corner of the car and had seen nothing.

When I reached home I was heart-sick. There was no question about it; Dick had been courting me and at the same time carrying on an affair with another girl. I told Aunt Cordelia's maid that I would not need her and flung myself on the beautiful bed. How silly I had been, perhaps flinging away my chances of marriage as far as Don was concerned! All for silly romantic ideas of the city and wealth and society! That Don would be a most welcome husband for any one of eight girls back home, I knew. Don, good, old steady Don, who had never looked at any other girl!

Suddenly, as though the two men stood before me, I saw them: Don, spending his youth helping others, doctoring people who thought him a god at the moment of need but forgot him entirely when they were paying their bills; Dick VanderCleck, wasting his youth in useless rounds of pleasure and maybe even wild dissipations!

Dick called for me at eleven o'clock the next morning. We had arranged to have luncheon downtown and go to a special matinee of a play being put on by one of Aunt Cordelia's protégés. Instead of having on my afternoon clothes, I was dressed in my tan travelling suit with the loose tan travelling coat over my arm.

"I'm sorry, Dick," I said, trying to make my voice casual, "but I'm going back home on the noon train. Jerrems is getting the car now to take me downtown to the station."

He looked at me sharply. "Why the haste? Can't you go tomorrow noon, or next week, as you'd planned?"

I shook my head.

"You—you're not angry—about last night?" he said in a low voice.

I dropped my eyes. When I again looked at him his gaze shifted from mine.

"I—I just thought you were," he said sullenly. "Gad! if you could have seen the expression on your face when Billy kissed me! And the quick way you looked at Aunt Cordelia!"

"Billy?" I repeated foolishly. "Billy? But it was a girl—"

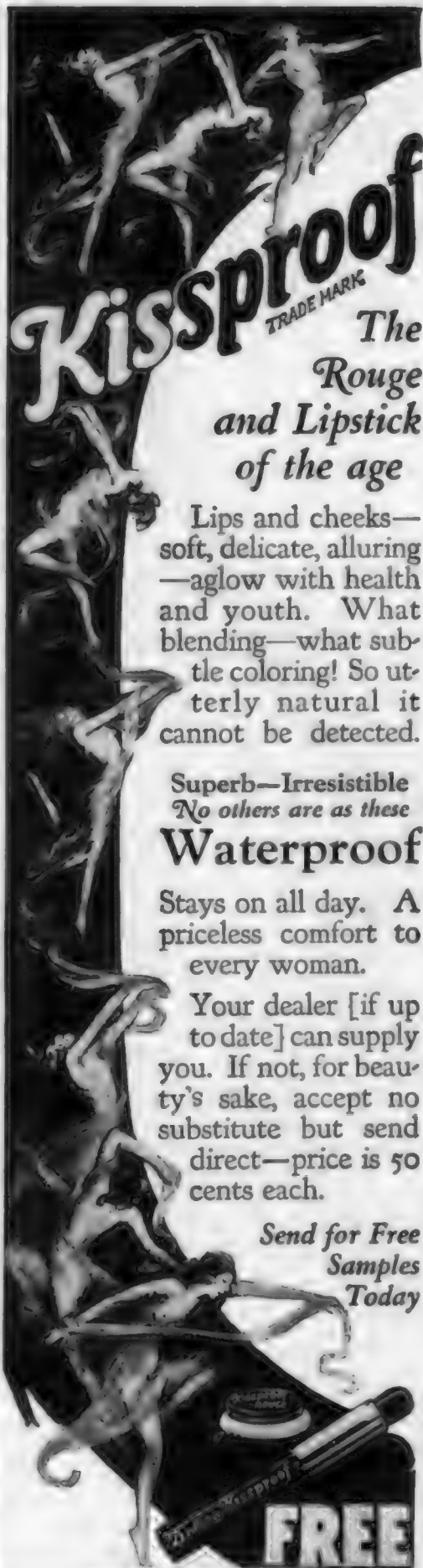
HE LAUGHED shortly. "Her stage name is Billy Frost. You needn't look so shocked. I'm no Puritan; never pretended to you that I was, did I? I've certainly played fair with you—"

"But to—" I exclaimed, aghast.

"Oh, don't be a prude!" he interrupted sharply. "Men like me have to have some amusement and relaxation—"

"Stop!" I said, raising my hand. "I'm going—going back home to marry Doctor Don. I—I guess I've loved him all the time, Dick, and this—this visit has just been a little interlude."

Don and I have been married eight years now. Josie and Ed and little Don are scuffling on the floor with the dog as I relate this. Sometimes in the evening when the kiddies are all in bed and the quiet time of the day comes, I wonder—wonder if such contentment and happiness could ever have come to me had I married Dick—or even the Duke! For with the passing of the years Don and I are more and more in love than ever we were before marriage! And when I think how dangerous might have been that little interlude, my heart thumps wildly, only to be reassured by Don's gentle, loving glance.



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The Sea Laughed Back

(Continued from page 27)

It was all too brutally true. Ten years had been too long for a man to remain away and expect to come back home and claim a woman. Nona had believed me dead. She had married, and forgotten. Most likely my daughter, Edith, had married, too, and gone away.

All the longer I had felt for my woman and my girl on that lonely island gnawed like an awl in my heart as I watched my wife praying for another man. Naturally, I suspected the trouble. Nona's new man followed the sea. She was offering a prayer for her scuttling man's safety in the storm.

I thought I was a man; thought I had proved this. Now I was being called on to prove it again. This time, on my own front porch. With the wind and sea laughing back at me, I thought of my porch as the quarter-deck of a sinking ship. The law of sailing men and of ships flashed through my numbed brain.

A master is the last to leave his ship. More often he goes down with her—goes down when deck and wheel plunge under him. I had followed this code of the sea ten years ago in a furious Pacific night.

But such a law could not be followed tonight. I could not stand by my home, as I would have stood by my ship, until the last. I knew I must desert my own front porch; must run away from the light that had led me into shoal water instead of safe anchorage. My Nona's happiness must not be crossed. I, Big Petersen, must return to the dead—the dead of the open sea.

I turned from the window, not daring a last look at the woman praying inside the cottage. The gold of her hair against the black of the oilskin coat, which shrouded her form, was too much for me. I did not swagger toward the steps. I shuffled. I did not run down them agilely. I shambled down on my way back to the dead.

The mocking sea licked at my feet like white fangs. Another step and the tide would have touched me. However, I did not take that step. A woman's scream, piercing the roar of the storm, stopped me. It was Nona's voice! My heart thumped like a lead hammer against my side. Strength flooded back to my legs. I swung about and rushed up the steps to the window, just in time to see my wife spring from her knees and fling her arms toward the south window in a gesture of minute supplication. I pulled back, vainly trying to range the gloom that blotted out the south.

"God have mercy! A light—a ship in the surf!"

INSTANT pity for the doomed craft welled up in my breast. I understood in a flash. The ship had been driven shoreward by the storm. She was already a stricken thing.

Another glance through the window electrified me. Nona was buttoning her oilskin coat tighter; she was cramming a black sou'wester down over her golden hair. Nona was going out into the storm! The love of ships was in her blood. Maybe God would send her a way to help!

I cleared the porch railing with a spring, landing in the yielding sand. Crouching behind a thick pine post, I waited for my wife to brave the storm. From the hiding place I watched the plunging light. Now it could be seen—then it dipped out of sight, smothered, most likely, by a wave.

A figure brushed by me, phantom-like. I stepped from behind the pine post. I was not afraid of discovery. My voice had

changed in ten years. It was too dark to see anything but shadowy outlines. Any how, even if there had been light, my heavy mustache would have saved me from recognition.

"You can't do any good, mam, unless somebody's washed ashore. Don't go any further. The wind'll sweep you to sea," I bellowed, closing in upon the shadow of my wife.

Nona stopped as if she had been shot. A voice had reached her. But she had not caught all the words. Had they come from sea or shore? The wind seemed bent upon tearing her loose from the sand. I caught her fast, my fingers burning at the touch, my heart breaking all over again.

"You'll be swept to sea," I shouted. "Come back."

NOW the woman understood. Her strength flared up as I started to drag her back from the frothing tide. She fought to free herself from the mastery of iron arms that had gripped her in the storm. I did not want to hurt her. But there was a moment in her freedom. The sea might claim her, too. I found myself expending more strength.

"My man's out there on that boat. Let me go," she shrieked, struggling in my grasp.

My strength suddenly melted. Nona's man was out on the doomed craft! That's why she was challenging the wind and sea!

"Your man!" I cried back, feeling as if she had wounded me.

"Yes, Nels Johnson, my husband," she answered above the storm.

Another knife went through my heart. Nels Johnson! He had tried to win Nona from me long ago. Afterward he became a coast fisherman. So, like the sea, Nels had bested me in the long run! Well, if Nels Johnson was out there in the surf, he would never come back to Nona alive. The sea would claim him, too!

This thought made my strength come back. After all, I was only human. I wanted Nona and home above everything in the world. If Johnson went down to Davey Jones' locker, and I, Big Petersen, returned home, Nona would be mine again. It was my happiness against another man's!

I pressed Nona to me once more. This time she did not struggle, but lay limp against me. I sensed the cause of this. Nona was done for . . . tuckered out. Of course, she was alone in years now; for all of the way her hair had remained so golden. But, if the power of her arms had weakened, her voice had not. She was shouting something to me now.

"For God's sake, Mister, do try to save him. I—I need him . . ." Her voice was lost in the howling wind for a few seconds. But, at last, I caught a few words that were like bullets ripping through my chest.

"I—I'm going to have a—baby," were the words.

No longer was it a question of my happiness, or another man's. It was Nona's only to consider. I came to this knowledge with a pain that would always be deathless, like my memories of Pilot Island's courting log. My wife was going to give Nels Johnson another child! What a thing for me to find out. Well, I must think only of Nona now—not of Nels, or myself.

I ordered her back to the cottage. She refused to leave. Together we ranged the surf again for some sign of plunging lights. There they were, two of them, hard to starboard of our position on the beach. Marvelling that the surf had not claimed them as yet, I ran toward the lights. When opposite, I waded into the swirling

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sea, thinking I might catch someone the surf would fling ashore.

I was knee-deep in the breakers when the lights suddenly lifted clear of shadowy seas. Fighting the undertow with every ounce of strength, I stopped in my mad advance. I realized the tragic significance of those lifting lights. The craft had grounded, and, for a moment, was clear because of a rushing swell. When she came down in the trough, a breaker would smash her into the sand shoal.

I waited for the moment of inevitable doom. It came, making itself known only by the sudden sniffling out of two lights. There was only one thing left to do now. I would stand by and see if the sea washed some sure signs of its human toll ashore.

It seemed hours while I waited in the freezing water. At last, when there was no sign of man or wreckage drifting shorewards, I gave up the search. The sea had swallowed Nels Johnson. Nona was mine once more!

I staggered back to her, glad of this. She began begging me to look again for her man before I could say a word. I protested by standing still. Suddenly she fell on her knees and tugged at my hands, imploring me to run along the beach to the southward. Nona knew the tricks of the sea. She knew a northeast wind and tide would wash men and broken ships to the southward of the beach, if at all.

Her pleading conquered my own feelings and desires. Starting southward, I skimmed along high water mark, and into the shallows. I must have gone fifty yards or so when a man's voice reached me. It was a feeble sound, suggesting pain and hurt. Dropping to my knees, I groped about until I realized a man was lying, face down in the sand, just beyond the tide. Most likely the surf had flung him into shallow water, and he had managed to reach this point before falling exhausted. . . . Somehow, I raised the man to my shoulders, and returned to where Nona waited. Strength failed me then, and I deposited the man on the damp sand. Nona went down on her knees, her hands fumbling at the sea victim's heart. He was alive! Courage came to her now. Her fingers moved over his face. She screamed joyously into the night.

"Nels—Nels! It's him! Oh, thank God, Mister, it's him!"

She leaned over after this outburst and worked to bring him back to his senses. But the work was slow in the dark. She said he must be carried to the house. Once more I commandeered my exhausted mus-

cles. Picking up Nels Johnson, I stumbled across the sand to where the tide still licked the cottage steps. With Nona steadying me, I swayed up the steps.

I was at the door; I paused. No, I could not go into the lamplight; into my own home that was mine no longer. Fear ate into my heart like acid. I was afraid to trust myself inside. I stood, blocking the door, not knowing what to do. My hesitancy aroused Nona to action. She slipped her hand past me to the knob; she twisted it with a shove and half-pushed me and my burden through the opening door.

"Put him on the couch there," she ordered, closing the door to the raging wind.

I OBEYED. Then I turned, determined to run out of the room before something inside of me refused to go back to the dead. No; the woman stayed me by a gesture of the hand. It was plain she had no intention of letting me go. I turned my eyes away from her. Although the oilskins and sou'wester completely hid her form and features, her sight crazed me with hunger for her lips.

"I must get some whiskey for you and him. You'll catch your death of cold," her voice sounding the same as it had twenty years ago. "It's in another room. I'll have to wake her up. She always locks herself in that room yonder when it storms. She can't stand the raging of sea and wind anymore. You see, her man never came back from—"

"Who in God's name are you talking about?" I broke in, hoarsely, a tremendous suspicion spreading through my heart.

"My mother," answered the woman, shocked by the interruption. "But quick, Mister. We can't wait any longer. Rub his wrists while I get the hot grog. My man needs whiskey to bring him 'round."

"Stand by," I shouted, advancing towards the door, my rough hands throttled by the uproar of my being. "Who are you? What is your name? Quick!"

"Edith Johnson," she said. A strange sort of laugh crackled through my lips. It was a mixed thing of mockery and thanksgiving in one. My daughter slunk back at the laugh, afraid she was with a madman.

All the strength of my youth returned in this flaming moment as I sprang past her. I wrenched a door open and dived into the dark.

"Nona," I said softly. "I've come back home . . . Nona, it's your own Big Peter— I'm back from the dead!"

Wasted Years

[Continued from page 76]

appealed to me. I imagined it concealed a deep tenderness. I would look at your mouth and picture what it would mean to kiss it until it melted. But it never did. I came to believe that you were not stifling emotion; that on the contrary, there was no emotion to conceal. When Teddy came I hated you. You were so controlled. It's easy, I told myself, for him to be calm. He isn't suffering. My love died then.

"There is no hope whatever for me, now."

"I'm afraid not. I've got so in the habit of thinking you were not quite human—not capable of feeling like ordinary people . . ."

I held her hand against my wet cheek.

"Can you doubt it again?"

"No, but it's been so long. I'm not young any more. And you're like a different person—someone I'd have to get used to all over again. Besides—to-morrow . . ."

"And after tomorrow?"

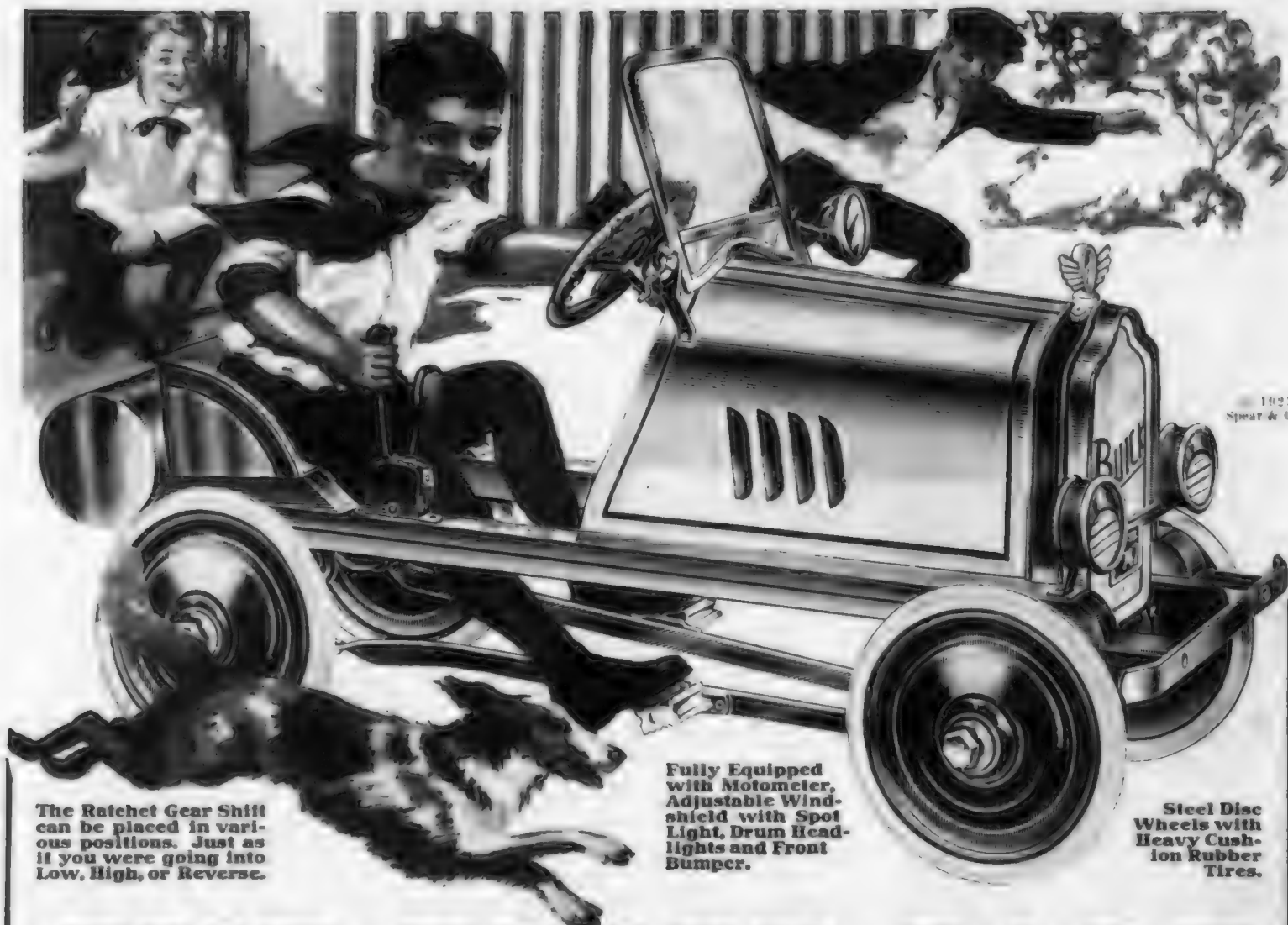
Her eyes thanked me for the reassurance my question gave.

"I can't promise. This morning I would have sworn nothing could ever make me change. But somehow—when I heard you crying . . ."

My heart sensed the hope in that faltering, unfinished, sentence.

"It will come," I said.

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All Alone

(Continued from page 20)

"Read the verdict," commanded the judge.

My eyes clung to every movement of the clerk's hands as he unfolded the paper. His face, too, was pale and grave. He cleared his throat. His voice sounded clearly through the courtroom.

"We, the jury," he read, "do find the defendant, Gertrude Brown, guilty as charged."

What happened immediately after that terrible verdict is not clear in my mind. Even now, after I have had so much time to consider it deliberately and calmly, with the world so far away beyond these hideous walls and bars, it's as a dream.

I remember passing from the courtroom through a multitude of faces which I could not look at, because I sensed that some of them smiled—derisively, triumphantly.

Pride aided me—the pride of youth and of supreme sacrifice for the only man I loved or ever can love. I had made my retribution complete. I had paid my debt to Roy in full. In the jail the kindly turnkey allowed me to see him again for a few minutes. It was in a passageway between the women's cells and the hospital ward.

I remember that in spite of my own tragedy, I was glad he smiled, for in that smile was forgiveness.

"I heard about the verdict, kid," he said, his voice unsteady, "and I'm sorry. I wouldn't have brought this on you for the world, honest."

"Do you still love me?"
"More than anything on earth," he said. I felt his arm creep around my waist and I sobbed, for the first time that day, on

his shoulder. It was such a relief to cry.

"Don't worry," he said, tenderly. "Stick it out, kid, and it will come out all right. They're taking me to prison tomorrow, but I'm going to be good up there and try for a parole. I'll be out in a few years and I'm going to lay off the dope and go straight—"

"Do you mean it, dear?" I interrupted. "I'm going to do it for you," because you're the dearest little sweetheart that a man ever had."

"I'll be in prison, too," I said. "Roy, swear by everything you know that you won't forget me—no matter what happens."

"I swear it with all my heart," he answered.

That was the last time I saw him, except the next day, when I had only a fleeting glimpse of him as he stepped into a car beside a deputy sheriff on his way to the railroad station—and then to prison. Ten years!

I grasped one of the heavy bars in each hand as I gazed through and saw the car with the man I loved disappear around a corner.

The next day I was sentenced by the same stern-faced judge. He spoke in the same droning voice, although my quick ears caught an imaginary break in it—"from one—to ten years."

I do not believe now that I shall ever go back to Roy—but I will never, never love anyone else, and perhaps—well—

It is spring again now, and I pruned a little rosebush in the front yard of the prison this morning.

I hope it will bloom. Little inconsequential things mean so much to me now, with the rest of the world shut off.

The Hi-jackers' Girl

I wonder if you ever dream of the strange and terrible corners of the earth which exist only in the imagination of most of us? I'm sure I get more than one big surprise every month—and I ought to be used to such things by this time.

We are publishing a strangely powerful story in the July issue which describes things you could not dream existed. It is a story written from a whiskey-stained manuscript which was turned over to a member of SMART SET staff by a friend who found it in a bottle on the shore of Long Island.

I read it over several times and started to laugh—and then something in it just "got" me and I read it again, and again, and again. Then I had one of our editors rewrite it and put its story in shape for SMART SET. It's one of the most astounding things you ever saw. Of course we've whipped it into shape and made it more readable, but we haven't changed the facts which the girl relates.

There is no address on the manuscript; no hint as to who she is, except for a reference to going to school in Atlanta, Georgia, and to her running away from home and coming to New York.

It has to do with the much-hinted-at rum fleet, and hi-jackers and smugglers. All the thrills of the pirates,—and yet it came to us in such a way that it just took me in, and I think it will you.—THE EDITOR.

So I Went With Him

[Continued from page 70]

the forests; we canoed on the lakes. Life was at its most glorious peak for us.

Lying on his back, his handsome head resting on his clasped hands, his body crushing the pine-needles, he looked up at the sky and talked of his next novel.

"I think I shall call it 'The Wave.' I shall show that man is just that. He is played upon by the other elements. The surging sea tosses him about. The winds play with him. He is a wave of human emotions. Don't like the theme, my darling?"

WHY not picture a man as 'The Rock'? I like to think of him as stronger than a wave. Don't let him be a mere pawn in the game of circumstances."

"But he is. A man, moonlight, a girl in an enticing gown, opportunity,—what is a man before them?"

"I don't like the picture, Arthur."

"But it is true and such a novel will sell."

"Probably. But, dearest, is love to depend upon such slight circumstances? Are you an opportunist in love? Aren't men true to their ideals?"

He laughed. He kissed me. He told me I was wholly adorable. Before arguments so personal even a woman is mute.

When we went back to town and Arthur prepared to resume his literary harness, he lovingly protested against my being his secretary. "It is too taxing, dear," he said. There was hope that another life would join ours. He would not let it be imperiled by too great application. "Instead of taking dictation from me in the library, you must spend your hours in the court and park, and in driving in safe places," he insisted.

"It's too severe work for a woman, anyway. I'm going to hire a man."

The young man was a college sophomore who wanted to write and who believed he could learn much at the feet of a master. When the novel had reached midstream, a message came from Mark Struthers.

"Broke my leg last evening in an auto smash. Sending my cousin to fill in. She knows how." My husband dejectedly read the message. "This is awful. If she can't do the work I may have to ask your help for a while."

"I will be so glad, Arthur. Let me undertake it now."

But the current flowed on, he told me. "She is all right. She will do," he said.

Arthur told me he was finishing the first rough draft of the book and was at a critical point in it. He asked me to invite Miss Joyce to dine with us so that the work might be continued after dinner with no other interruption. I did and I watched the "supply" interestedly across the table. A slim, sensitive girl in white, who listened to every word of the master, and followed his every movement with wide-eyed admiration.

"Commonplace and good," I thought.

"Shall we walk in the court a little before I begin work?" my husband asked me as we rose from the table.

"You and Miss Joyce may," I said. "Aunt Agatha and I will change our gowns and walk farther and longer."

I slipped from my black dinner dress and flung on a yellow peignoir while I looked for a linen street dress. I stopped suddenly. From the window next to mine came a sound, harsh, low, like the crackling of broken old sticks. It was Aunt Agatha laughing!

I leaned from my window and looked at the old woman. She sat, a gray silhouette, in the mellow moonlight.

"Won't you tell me the joke?" I asked.

She pointed with gnarled, brown finger toward the fountain. My husband was

pressing a slim, white figure to his own. A moonbeam struck a rapt, upturned face. He covered it with kisses. It was the face of Miss Joyce.

I heard a sound that terrified me. It was a scream. It was like that of a wounded panther in the forest. I fell from the casement—out upon the little carved balcony. Something stronger than I was hurling me as with hidden hands toward the court below.

I stretched out my saving hand to the balcony railing. Again the pantherlike scream. I saw two faces, white in the moonlight, turned toward me. Two figures fell apart. Again Aunt Agatha laughed.

A scratching sound at the door. A gray figure came in. Aunt Agatha was still laughing.

"You poor fool!" she said. "Don't you know that character repeats itself? Did you think you could hold my nephew when his first wife couldn't?"

She closed the door and met my husband in the hall.

"I don't know whether she slipped or threw herself out. If she did she thought better of it," I heard the cracked old voice say. "for she has come back into her room."

Arthur flung open the door and came breathlessly in. I stood leaning against the dresser and looked at him. He looked back without a word. His lips opened and closed, opened again. His mouth hung foolishly open. Minute after minute we stood thus facing each other in an all understanding silence. Slowly I raised my arm and pointed to the door. He went.

I walked up and down and round and round the room. I heard strange moaning sounds as of a stricken animal. I was not sure whether it was I who uttered them. Spent with weakness, I sank down upon the bed. Tears came.

A rap which I did not answer. The door opened. A ruddy, kindly face in a frame of fast graying black hair swam out of the light. It was my physician.

He rang for a maid and gave orders that no one of the family, none save her and a nurse, should be allowed to see me. He sat for a long time soothing me, begging me for the sake of that other life so near dawn to try to compose myself.

The next day he took me in his grey car to a sanitarium in the woods. I was violently ill. I do not remember entering the brick house. They tell me the doctor carried me in. Out of the black, submerging depths of a long illness I looked and saw his face—a face of infinite pity and boundless tenderness; a healing face.

MY BABY died, killed by that cataclysm of emotion.

My divorce was easily arranged.

I do not know whether Arthur Milton will marry Miss Joyce. I do not care. The shock of the revelation killed my love for him as a lightning bolt blasts a tree. I mourn for what I now know was my part in the first Mrs. Milton's death. She had seen and had flung herself to death. And I, in my first black impulse, had tried to do the same. I went to her grave and knelt and asked her forgiveness.

Dr. Benton followed and found me there. He lifted me from my knees.

"You have atoned," he said. "It was your first experience with love. You could not know that you were blinded by it. You could not know then that a man who deceives one woman will in turn deceive another. Come with me."

I went with him into a new life; into a love that is calm and sure, and as steady as the stars.

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A Foolish Promise

[Continued from page 72]

I was thrilled with the grandeur of the beautiful countryside, bathed in a luxuriant robe of glinting moonlight, as Gerald held me tightly in his strong arms. He was the most impulsive type of lover; one who crushes down all barriers, all physical resistance.

BUT on this particular night even Gerald seemed stayed by some strange power. He held me tenderly in his arms but did not attempt any of his crushing crusades, for which he had been noted. He looked longingly into my eyes, however, and breathed the most endearing terms I had ever heard upon my warm lips.

"Why, oh, why can we not get married?" he finally blurted out, for I had never told him of my deathbed promise. "When I love you with all my soul and body, Dorothy, you should not keep me in such mortal agony. It's not fair to me, nor to you, for I have cherished you these many years, and I wanted so to take you after Ronald's death, but respected his memory too much. Now, you have waited the respectful length of time. Be mine, Dorothy, dearest!"

I did not have the heart or courage to answer him. The pleading in his eyes drove cold fear into my heart, for I dared not tell him the truth. It was too apparent that his love was an overpowering force, which would sooner or later either drive him on to take me by brute force, unless I told the truth, or might compel him to hate me for keeping the truth from him. For that reason, not knowing the outcome, I was afraid to speak.

We finally approached his cabin, where the merry shouts of the party greeted us. Gerald lifted me bodily from the limousine and carried me into the midst of the jovial throng, many of my old associates in the good old days. We soon became the center of attraction and they all insisted on my doing the sensational dance which had won me fame on the stage.

By this time many of the men had become crazed over my dancing. There was one of the number, Stanley White, who had once sworn he would have me if it were the last thing he ever did. Tonight I noticed with dread fear that he kept watching me.

In this exotic dance I used nothing but a thin gauze garment draped over my figure, and the lights had been purposely subdued to produce the desired effects. For some unknown reason I seemed to be strangely inspired, and danced as I had never danced before. Of that sea of eyes fastened upon my graceful flourishes, one pair alone seemed to bore right through my very being. At times they held me spell-bound, fearful, paralyzed; then again they would release me, and I would whirl with a fiendish delight, almost as if I were under a weird hypnotic spell.

Suddenly the lights flashed out. I hesitated momentarily, when I felt a pair of gorilla-like arms encircle my soft body. I tried to cry out but my vocal chords were paralyzed. Then the cold air was upon my body, and I felt myself being carried as in a daze through the chill night. I did not seem to realize that I could not long endure the rigor of that cold December night without anything but the gauze drape about me.

For several miles my captor carried me thus. Suddenly he halted, while he attempted to warm my chill body by clasping and unclasping me in his powerful arms. Then I discovered it was the drunken

Stanley White, who had sworn to have me. Shortly after, I heard the approach of a huge car from the road above and Stanley turned viciously to face an assailant.

It was Gerald, who had left his car on the road above and stood now facing us. From an inside pocket Stanley had extracted a menacing revolver, which was now leveled at Gerald. I was too stiff by this time to move even a muscle in Gerald's defense.

"If you come a step nearer I will shoot you down like a dog," threatened Stanley. "I have sworn to get her and I have done it, and no sissy like you will ever take her away."

Never uttering a sound, Gerald, with face a livid white, kept coming steadily toward us. I tried to breathe out a warning when a deafening report rang out like the crack of doom! All went blank, and when I regained consciousness I was lying on a spotlessly white cot, with Gerald lying nearby and a physician working over him.

"Just a flesh wound," the doctor muttered, and I sank again into unconsciousness. When I came to again, Gerald was standing over me, muttering endearing terms.

The terrible experience I had undergone rendered me unfit to continue the exacting work on the stage. After this trying ordeal I went away for a much needed rest, but my money slowly dwindled. There followed weeks of worry and deprivation. I was too proud to resort to my many rich friends' charity, so I worked at odd jobs, suffering the tortures of the damned! Then one day Gerald discovered me in these embarrassing circumstances. He begged me to marry him and forget the terrible past.

There came the painful memory of my darling husband. The pathos of that deathbed promise stung me to the quick. Could I break that promise and marry the man I loved, in order to secure the luxuries my starved little heart craved? I came very near weakening, and Gerald saw it in my eyes. And then, to prevent my breaking the promise, I told him the secret.

Poor Gerald! He broke down and cried like a child, unrestrainedly, when the realization of the unfair promise smote upon him. I have never witnessed such mental agony in all my life. The surging tide of the years seemed to well up and roll over and crush out his happiness. He held me to his breast, then slowly, reluctantly, released me, as if his act were sacrilegious—an insult to the memory of my dead husband.

MY GOD! That's unfair! No mortal man has a right to exact such a promise from any woman!

Together we cried out our tears. Finally he left me, after making me promise that I would reconsider my rash oath. Trying to forget everything the following day, I hired out to a road-show which was moving westward, and took the next train for Chicago. After several months travel I finally landed in Los Angeles. There I quit the show and retired into obscurity, but the ravages of hunger followed me.

At a word from me Gerald will come sailing on wings of love to take me into his protecting arms. I am in dire need. Shall I continue on this way in abject poverty, or shall I break the fetters of a deathbed promise and free myself by marrying my childhood sweetheart?

This is a woman's problem. See how wonderfully it is answered in the story on page 91.

The Answer

ON THE day after my wife's funeral, when I returned to my empty apartment, it seemed to me that the entire world had crashed. Among my wife's belongings I found a sealed letter addressed to me. It was like a voice from the dead and was dated the day after the doctor had intimated that typhoid fever might develop.

Dear Allen:

I have a premonition that I will not get well. Now that baby is here, our happiness has been almost too great to last. All I've looked forward to in life has been fulfilled by you and baby.

For yours and baby's sake I want you to marry again. She will need a mother. Do not grieve too much for me. If I go, it is God's will. I will be watching over you and loving you both just the same. Bless you, dear.

Bertha.

When I had read it I broke down and cried, for the first time. Until then my grief had been too great for tears. Life stretched out ahead of me like a dreary waste of gray water.

I had loved Bertha deeply! In my blind, selfish grief I forgot my baby and tried to go to Bertha. Somewhere in the house I had a revolver. Had I found it, I should probably have killed myself; but when I reached into the drawer I found only tiny baby clothes. That sobered me and I was sane again.

There were times when I almost hated God, but they passed away and I seemed to see clear again, for there was baby to think of and to work for. Her life and her future was the next great duty that evolved upon me.

Several times I was tempted to give her away or place her with other people to raise for me, but when the time came I couldn't do it. There was something so innocent, so appealing in the little face, in the deep blue eyes that were her mother's, and which said, "Don't do it."

Then and there I made a resolution, and I have stuck to it throughout later years. I would abandon my career as a professional actor and get into something solid and steady.

Writing had always appealed to me and I tried it for a while; but my work didn't seem to suit the editors and I turned to business.

Soon I discovered that I had struck my proper sphere. Incidentally, I learned still more to worship marriage as an institution.

Of course, I had not been a model of propriety all my life. I might even say that the reverse had been true in my earlier years. I had travelled the world over several times and had tasted the civilizations of both hemispheres; but when my time came to really fall in love, I regretted bitterly what before had seemed my right.

MY FIRST love had been one of those all-absorbing affections that carried me into the seventh heaven of happiness. We had had our baby only eighteen short months when Bertha died.

I was only twenty-nine. But I worked earlier and later than most of the men in the office. Constant work afforded me relief from my thoughts and memories. It was my only salvation.

Somewhat I seemed to be able to command each situation that came up. I had kept my apartment and my baby. A little girl on the floor below took care of her for me, and the baby soon grew to love her.

Month after month she came upstairs in the mornings, with a regularity and faithfulness I could not help but notice.

Had I not been blind, I would have seen that she was growing more and more at home with both of us. Sometimes she would stay later in the evening and talk.

But it was not until she told me that her family was moving away, and noticed how badly she herself felt about it, that I realized how we would miss her, baby and I. Perhaps my face showed how sorry I was, for she blushed and started away.

Then, too, I remembered the little chats we had had before the fire; the little confidences we had exchanged; the little intimate talks we had had concerning my work. Then suddenly it came to me that my success had been due as much to her as to my efforts, in that she had taken the care and worry over baby out of my hands.

Involuntarily, I called to her to come back, and she came.

Again I stopped, my eyes on Bertha's picture. For the first time I realized that, even though it did seem disloyal to her, I was in love with Ruth. And I said it just that way, as if I were talking to the picture. Ruth turned to me slowly with big tears standing in her eyes and said:

"Don't you know that I, too, love Bertha? And that is why I could love you and baby, too."

She came into my outstretched arms and we stood for a long time looking down upon the sleeping baby. In that moment the child became ours jointly.

Two days later we drove over to another town and were married. Of course it wasn't much of a wedding for Ruth; but her eyes shone as if we had taken a trip to Egypt for a honeymoon.

THEN came an unexpected blow. My employer failed three months after our wedding, and I became deeply depressed by this misfortune.

In this extremity Ruth came to the front, like the thoroughbred she was, and proposed that she go to work for the time being to help us out. I was just old-fashioned enough to refuse. It hurt my pride to think of using the money she earned—and then there was baby Bertha.

So I went out in search of work at a time when millions of others were searching likewise. But my pent-up emotions, my inability to do at least a share of the work of supporting us, weighed upon me terribly and brought on a nervous breakdown.

I was helpless for many weeks, which I remember none too distinctly. In the dazed condition I was in at first, Ruth's face seemed to be constantly hovering over me. Later on, after I had recovered somewhat, I learned that she was working and that the face that had hovered over me had been that of the nurse.

* * * * *

A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since that bitter winter. I am well and happy now, and have been rather successful in a small way in business. But it was Ruth, who pulled me through; Ruth, who earned our living and paid the bills that winter; Ruth, who has guided me to success in my business.

We have a little son now. He is just six. Bertha has grown into a beautiful girl. She is getting more like her own mother every day. Her mother's picture hangs on the wall of the living room where she can see it. Ruth and little Bertha often speak of her.

We have all been happy, and if you ask me whether Marriage is an aid to success I shall answer "NO." Marriage is not an aid to success. Marriage IS success. If it proves otherwise, the fault lies within ourselves!

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Mr. Morris will be marrying, himself, some day, you know, and what then of all your—

"It's that Sommerville woman, of course," I told myself, "and it's Mrs. Cameron's way of preparing me for what's coming—preparing me to give my children up!" But that thought was so terrible that I couldn't bear it, and I flew from the house and out to where David happened to be playing alone under a big tree; and gathering him in my arms I held him in such a fierce embrace that he cried out in protest, "Don't, Hiddy; you hurt!" and, glancing up and catching me in tears, "Nother cinder, Hiddy."

"I would to God it were a thing with no more pain to it than a cinder in the eye!" I answered. And though David did not understand the remark, he must have sensed the deep trouble beneath it, for he threw his arms around my neck and tightened them with all his might.

"I've just foolin' when I said you hurt me," he said. "Squeeze me as hard as you want to."

I tried to hide my worries from the family. It wasn't right for them to see that anything was spoiling my visit. I tried to appear gay and light-hearted; I pleased Mother by going about with Henry Nelson, who had immediately begun courting me.

"All the girls are after him," Mother tried to boost his stock.

"He's at no pains to hide that from me," I'd laugh. "At that, though, Henry's got some cause to feel a bit set up, seeing all he's done for himself."

Mother took much encouragement from such remarks, lacking in significance though they were, and my loss of appetite and fits of abstraction she'd put down as the natural result of the serious consideration I was giving to Henry.

"I might just as well marry him and please poor Mother," I'd dismally conclude at times. "If the children are taken from me, life won't be worth living, anyway. Better be buried way off here on a farm than have to be where I'd be tortured with the sight of them when they're no longer mine." And then in wild rebellion my anguished soul would cry out, "But I won't. I won't, I won't give them up! I'll take them away with me and hide in some far country where they can't be found. That woman *shan't* have them. They're mine! They're mine!"

BEFORE I let this thing come to pass, I'll go to Mr. Morris and tell him the truth about her—how she's fooling him! I'll go to court and make the judge give them to me. I'd rather see them dead than in her hands. I'll jump in the lake with them and drown!"

These were some of the wild thoughts that ran through my mind as I battled with my problem, and all the time I knew that I'd do none of these mad things; that if this terrible thing came to pass I'd have no alternative but to accept it with what courage I could.

"And besides, I may be just borrowing trouble," I concluded.

I refrained from definitely repulsing Henry's suit, because I couldn't bring myself to cut off this means of escape in case I found my worst fears confirmed on my return to Elmwood. Buried in the endless labor of a farm wife, I could finish out the days of my living death, I dolefully reflected; at that, my whole being recoiled from the totally unexpected, possessive kiss which Henry took the liberty of bestowing upon me at parting.

Being back in the friendly atmosphere of the Morris home, with the master of the house so plainly delighted, did much to revive my failing hopes; yet, we were no

more than settled for the evening when the telephone rang and Mrs. Sommerville was on the wire demanding that Mr. Morris come in and entertain her.

We heard him protest that the family had just got home and she'd have to excuse him tonight. Then, after considerable talk from her end of the line and kind answers from his, he took his hat and with a word of apology left us.

After he'd gone I found the opportunity to question Aunt Mattie about that affair. "There's something between them, isn't there?" I asked, and marveled at the calmness of my own voice.

OH, I'M sure there is," Aunt Mattie answered, seemingly delighted at what looked to her like another lovely romance. "In fact, Fanny told me as much."

"Why, Hilda," she said an instant later, "you've stuck yourself with that needle. See, it's bleeding, dear."

"Oh, have I? So I have." And I dabbed mechanically at the trickling stream of blood that I could not see for the blackness that enveloped me.

"I shouldn't have allowed you to take my band of wild Comanches with you on your trip," Mr. Morris said contritely a week or two later, on noting how peaked I was looking.

"Oh, it's not that," I assured him. "It's this changeable weather, I guess. David isn't feeling himself today."

So fast did the events of the next few terrible days crowd on that I shall never recall them except as a jumble of feverish, anguished impressions.

I was writing to Henry—writing with a sense of doom to tell him that I'd marry him, not before Thanksgiving, though—when David, who had been taking a nap, came in and, laying his head in my lap, began to whimper.

Now, eight years' association with a family of children had given me a measure of calmness in dealing with their ills. I didn't ordinarily fly into a panic at a little temperature, or a fretful cry; but as I lifted little David onto my lap that day and ran an appraising hand across his hot brow, such a storm of disaster swept me that I could scarcely muster strength to rise from my chair and summon the doctor. I sensed right then the terrible anxiety of the coming days when David would lie there burning with fever.

Our home transformed again into a house of grave illness, with Mr. Morris staying home from the office to haunt the sick room and ask over and over, "You're feeling better now, aren't you, old timer?" And David would give only the weakest, sickest little smile in answer, and finally not even that feeble sign of reassurance.

Mrs. Somerville sent gorgeous baskets of flowers and fruit, and many messages. She came to the house herself but twice, I believe, which was sensible, since there was nothing she could do. Her attitude on those occasions led me to believe that her course was adopted more because of a natural resentment of illness and ill people; I think she was especially put out at David for depriving her of a lover's attention.

"I do hope the poor lamb will be better by the twentieth," Fanny Cameron remarked significantly to her brother early in David's illness. "You know how Helen is if anything interferes with her plans."

She was speaking of the dinner Mrs. Sommerville was giving on that date to a few intimate friends, when it was tacitly admitted the engagement was to be announced. Yes, the terrible thing that I had feared was an assured fact now. They would probably marry soon; yet, of how little moment that was to me, with David lying at the point of death! My mind



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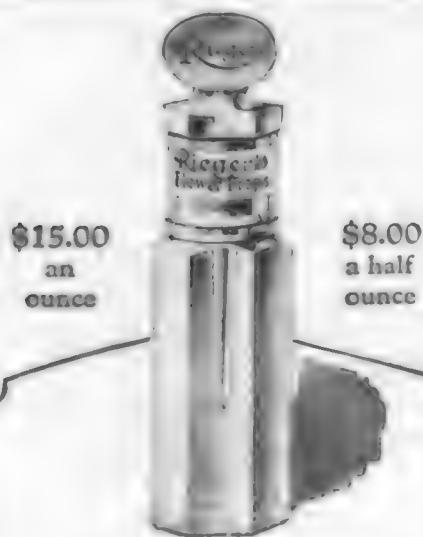
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was swept clean of all issues save the light that was being waged for my darling's life. If he should die—if he should die!

Iense, anguished, alert, I sat at his bedside, and though trained attendants ministered to him, too, it was only to my cool hand on his brow, my soothing tones, that his tossing delirium yielded, and he would become quiet.

ANXIOUS hour followed anxious hour. It was dawn—the grey dawn of fatigue: it was night—night illumined by the ghastly half-light of the bedside lamp, and fraught with the fear of what its low hours might bring. Dawn and dark and dawn again, and our whole thought centered on that little figure in the big white bed.

"But you can't go on this way; you must rest," the others kept telling me.

Leave my post when at any moment the crisis might be upon us, and only my fierce, passionate, demanding mother-prayers stand between my child and Death!

I wanted Mr. Morris to get some rest, though. His haggard face troubled me. He was so like a helpless big boy in his anxiety. I had the feeling of wanting to mother him—rub my hand across his rumpled hair and comfort him the same as if he'd been one of the children. And how resentful it made me to have Mrs. Sommerville keep disturbing him by calling him on the telephone. It was useless for anyone else to try to take her message. She wanted to speak to Mr. Morris himself; insisted that she could tell so much better how things really were going with "our darling little David" from his father's voice.

So Mr. Morris would tear himself from his son's bedside and at the telephone in the upper hall, just outside the sick room, patiently answer that woman's endless questions—though I don't think he knew half the time what he was saying; just something—anything to end the conversation and allow him to return to the room that held his whole thought now.

Judging from the end of the conversation which we heard, Mrs. Sommerville was worrying for fear she'd have to recall her dinner invitations. There'd be no point to her having it if Mr. Morris couldn't come. But unless David was "decidedly worse"—"unless he dies" was what she meant, for she knew there could be no "decidedly worse" in his case—Mr. Morris could come, couldn't he? They could reach him at once at her house if any change occurred.

It was sometime in the afternoon of the twentieth that the crisis came. There had been a tightening of the tension of the sick room along about noon. The doctor had come and was staying on. He looked very grave. There was an alertness about the nurse's attitude that told my frozen heart that the hour had come that was to decide my Davie's fate.

I heard the muffled ring of the telephone bell. Aunt Mattie slipped out to answer it and, after a few moments' guarded talk, came in and motioned for Fanny. "It's Helen Sommerville," I heard her whisper, "and she insists on speaking to Fred."

Fanny had not been able to handle her friend any better than Aunt Mattie had, for she came back a moment later and touched Fred on the arm, whispering, "You couldn't speak to Helen, could you, dear? She's insisting, and in rather a mix-up about her dinner tonight."

Mr. Morris did not even look up; he just shook his head. Fanny nodded understandingly. And no one thought to go out and relay his decision to the furious woman waiting at the other end of the wire, nor to hang up the dangling receiver which prevented Mrs. Sommerville's getting us again.

It was toward five o'clock that the doctor

detected a faint improvement in the patient's condition—almost too slight to constitute a change at all—but oh, how our hopes soared! Later there was some other feeble sign of encouragement. And in the easing of the tension of the sick room, Fanny suddenly remembered Mrs. Sommerville.

I heard her at the phone making her apologies, which evidently were not being very graciously received. "We were so upset by David's condition right then, that everything else was swept from our minds," she explained. "Fortunately, he's better now."

And then Fanny had to explain that David was hardly enough better yet that his father would dare leave him—"and you know, Helen, I've told you all along—and Fred has too—that you were foolish in going on with plans for the dinner if you were counting on his presence."

Mrs. Sommerville blew up entirely. Fred Morris would be at her house at a quarter of eight that night or everything was over between them, and Fanny was to relay that message to her brother so there would be no misunderstanding on his part as to what his failure to show up would mean. All this I soon learned.

"Helen is perfectly wild," Mrs. Cameron told Mr. Morris. "There's no reasoning with her. Do you suppose—"

Mr. Morris nodded thoughtfully, but said nothing.

I couldn't have moved just then. I sat there feasting my eyes on my darling, patting his pillow, uttering little endearments that went singing away for the joy that was in my heart; and suddenly I looked up and caught Mr. Morris' gaze upon me. My hands faltered to idleness; joy froze in my heart as the whole miserable tragedy of my existence came bearing down upon me. Mr. Morris—Mrs. Sommerville—he would go to her dinner—and they would be married—and the children—my children—my children and Mr. Morris—. At that moment of revelation I knew that it was Mr. Morris no less than the children that I could not bear to surrender to another.

"I've got to get away," I thought wildly, realizing a breakdown imminent. And I stumbled to my feet and dashed from the room. I made it as far as the post in the hall before the flood overtook me. There against the poor comfort of its hard surface I leaned, and let my grief have its way with me.

I didn't hear the door open softly behind me and a man's quick purposeful strides in the hall. The first I knew of Mr. Morris' presence was when he was tenderly substituting the support of his tweed shoulder for my present cheerless prop.

"Hiddy, don't cry, don't cry," he implored huskily. "Stop, dearest, and tell me that you'll marry me and stay with us always. I've got to be sure of that, honey. I love you, dear."

It was the ring of the telephone bell in the lower hall which brought Mandy out to answer it. Mrs. Sommerville was calling to give Mr. Morris one last chance to save their romance.

"Yas'm, Mrs. Sommerville," we heard Mandy say. "Just a minute an' I'll see can he come."

She turned toward the stairs and caught sight of us up there in the shadows. We were standing apart now, but something in our attitude must have told Mandy how things stood between us, for, without a word, she turned back to the instrument and this is what we heard her say:

"Mr. Morris asked me to inform you that he's very sorry indeed that he's too much occupied at present to converse with you. Yas'm, them's his exact words."

And the old darkey chuckled as she snapped the receiver back on the hook.

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On Probation

[Continued from page 52]

I've met a few people at the Strathmore who play bridge. That's expensive, too."

He stared, in dumb wonder, for a full minute.

"Aren't you going it a little bit strong, Ruth?" he asked, when he found his voice.

"Strong? What do you mean? Didn't you say you wanted me to spend money?"

"Yes, but I didn't say you could buy Atlanta, with the State of Georgia to boot. There's a limit, you know, Ruth."

I smiled at him. "It took me a long time to get started, John, so naturally I have to make up for lost time. You must admit I've done pretty well, for a novice. Only—I really need a good-sized check, John, and—and I'm in a hurry!"

He gave me another puzzled stare, then wrote out a check and handed it to me.

"Who—who are your friends?"

"Does it make any difference?" I answered, coolly.

IT DOES. You had better tell me." I wondered why my husband showed signs of temper. Following his eyes I found them fastened furiously on the back of a gentleman who had stared at me a little before leaving the room. It came over me, suddenly and delightfully, that John was jealous. I judged it advisable to let him stay that way.

"Well, if you're really interested, Mrs. Sparrow and her brother, Ray Curtis, and—"

"What! That hound—"

"I'm sorry, John, but I've got to dress for a bridge party, so I'll have to leave you. I hope you feel comfortable at the Empire. I'll be glad when I get out to an exclusive apartment, myself."

I left him, still wearing a blank and furious expression. In my room I removed my handsome fur coat, my dainty hat and gloves, touched my marcelled hair to see that it was in order, and put a dab of rouge on my cheeks. I had just slipped into my loveliest negligée, when the telephone bell rang. I would answer it.

Somehow, I knew that it was John who was calling. A thousand thoughts went through my brain. Should I follow my impulse and tell him how sorry I was that I had acted that way? I picked up the receiver, not yet knowing what I would say.

"Mrs. Latimer?"

"Yes?"

"Mr. Latimer calling."

"Yes?"

A pause, and then John's voice, somewhat savagely.

"Ruth, I'm coming up. I want to talk."

"I'm—not dressed."

"Oh, confound it, I'm your husband!"

"Are you trying to be funny, John? I'm not supposed to have a husband—for awhile at least. I'm on probation."

"I think it's you who are trying to be funny. I'm coming right up."

"Oh, if you must intrude, why, all right."

A grunt, and the conversation was at an end. I smiled at myself in the glass, but somehow the tears came to my eyes. They were still there when John entered, after a defiant knock. He stopped midway between me and the door.

"What are you crying for, Ruth?"

"I'm crying—because we are both—such fools. I am crying because—well, I guess it's just because I'm so happy to—to see you back! I—I thought I had lost you—and I was scared. You do love me, don't you, John?"

"Why, Ruth, darling! Why, Ruth, little sweetheart!"

For the first time, I knew how much he loved me.

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My Chief Desire

(Continued from page 32)

a life-long friend, Dr. Sweetland, asking if he could rent a house for the summer. A favorable reply came promptly. One week later we reached Seaport, where the physician, an elderly man of kind and gentle manners, welcomed us at the station and conducted us to our new home.

THE house was even more wonderful than I had hoped; a rambling structure with high ceilings, a great fireplace in the living room and no end of quaint old furniture. A riot of blooms made cheery the front garden and heavy trees scattered through the wide grounds gave the place an air of pleasant seclusion. To Una, who never before had been beyond the city's pavement, it must have seemed like paradise. And Clif and I shared her childish enthusiasm.

In the evening some of the younger people, those who had gone to school with my husband, called and bade us welcome. Everything was so splendid that first day and night that I felt the country had surpassed even my most extravagant expectations. And, when the others had gone, I hugged and kissed Clif, fairly bubbling over with enthusiasm for Seaport.

But it seemed as though fate was determined that I must encounter more clouds than sunshine, and a storm which fairly stunned me broke out of a clear sky the next day.

I accompanied Clif to the home of his Uncle Reuben, where we were to be introduced. But we never reached the house. Reuben Asher, big and masterful, with little hint of his years in his walk and carriage, came out as we turned in at the gate, but voiced no reply to Clif's smiling hello.

My heart sank as he approached, and Una drew closer, for there was no suggestion of welcome in the man's surly expression, no look of friendliness in the blazing eyes which peered out from beneath drawn brows.

"Well, what do you want here?" he shot at Clif, as he came to a pause directly before us.

"Why, Uncle Reuben, aren't you glad to see me?" There was hurt in my husband's tone.

"I might be—if you were alone."
"This is my wife. Now what do you mean about seeing me alone?" My husband snapped the query, and in his ruddy skin appeared the deeper flush of anger.

"I mean what I say. You know how I feel about things, and no play-actress is welcome here. Or in Seaport either, for that matter."

"How did you know my wife had been an actress?"

"Thought you were pretty slick, didn't you?" The old man's mouth twisted into a cunning leer. "Well, we hear things up here. Jim Bradley, who was to see you in the city, wrote home about it. You're not wanted in this neighborhood. Don't come again. And if you're wise, you'll go back where you came from quickly."

He whirled and stamped back toward the house. I was too dazed and ashamed to realize fully all that Reuben Asher had meant; only that my husband and I had been turned away because I had been on the stage. Clif, his hands trembling, but his lips drawn tight, took me by the arm, and with Una at our side, we returned home. No words were spoken on the way. But, once inside the house, I burst into a storm of tears which comforting words from my husband and my little one failed to check for a long time.

"What does it all mean, Clif?" I questioned finally. "Why is your uncle so bitter

against the stage that he treated us so brutally?"

"You mustn't mind him, Lady; mustn't let him spoil your holiday here. There was a family scandal which concerned an actress—years ago—but I didn't think he still retained his prejudice. The story isn't worth repeating. Such tales never are. Since he won't be friendly, we'll just forget him. There are plenty of others here."

I did not question him further, but soon found that he had not gauged the situation. We would have been better off had we taken Reuben Asher's advice and left Seaport at once. He was the town's wealthiest and most powerful resident, and because of the money he was able to lend or refuse, as he saw fit, and his domineering personality, there were few who dared oppose his will.

And it was not long before I began to appreciate his influence. Persons passed me on the streets with averted eyes, children were forbidden to play with Una, and endless efforts were made to make us realize we were not welcome.

Finally I ceased going upon the streets unless accompanied by Clif. But, that Una might not be denied her outings, I hired a maid from the town, Polly Coburn, to take her about. The woman had lived in Seaport all her life, and was familiar with all its doings, great and small.

It was from her that I learned that Reuben Asher was using his every effort to make existence at Seaport so unpleasant for me that I would be glad to leave. His most malignant act was to circulate a query as to the identity of Una's father, for it was obvious that she had been born before Clif and I were married. And it was Polly who, one day when we were alone, divulged much of the past of my tormentor and the incident which had caused him to align himself so strongly against the stage and its people.

Reuben, she said, though born to poverty, early displayed an ability to make money, saving practically every penny he earned and investing it wisely. His miserly habits had caused him to be generally disliked, but his financial resources made him a dreaded power in the town. His wife died when his only child, a son, was born. But, though the boy was the only one to share the home with him, he never treated him fairly, always overworked and brow-beat him. It was when the son became of age that he threw off the control which till then had held him submissive and did the thing which made him an outcast. Becoming infatuated with an actress who came to Seaport with a small-time show, he stole several thousand dollars from his father's safe and ran away with her.

REUBEN'S rage was terrible, and he published a notice disowning his son, utterly ignoring the fact that it had been his inhuman conduct which had killed any character the boy originally possessed. From that time on the man's tirades against the stage were frequent, and he carried his hatred to such a point that never thereafter was a traveling company permitted to show in the town hall, which he owned.

Two months of our unsatisfactory existence at Seaport had passed when Clif received an urgent summons to New York to take over the work of painting the murals for a new church. As it would be necessary for him to devote weeks to the preliminary labors of planning and designing, he urged me to abandon my adventure into the country as a failure and return with him, suggesting that the following summer we would go to a more congenial

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tears streamed from his eyes. My throat filled and hurt. The bitter mockery of it all stung me so I could not remain. Placing Una upon the bed beside him, I moved to the front room, where I summoned Dr. Sweetland by telephone. He came quickly and remained with his patient for more than an hour, during which the little one and I went into the garden, where I replied to her childish queries concerning "the man" as I thought best.

When the doctor came to me, I sent Una again to the sick room. Without evasion he told me that my visitor had but a day or two to live; that only sheer nerve was keeping him alive. He advised me to summon his friends. When I informed him that the man possessed none that I knew of, he studied me closely with questioning eyes, then asked if Cliff were acquainted with him. I shook my head.

"Hadden't we better send for him?" he asked.

"I have only been waiting for the opportunity," I replied. "If you will mail a letter for me, special, I will write it at once."

"Gladly. I'll wait for it." He asked no questions and I volunteered no information. I hoped to be able to keep my secret from everyone until I heard from Cliff.

The doctor saw his patient frequently during the following day, and at each visit his look became more grave. But it was not until the sun had begun to drop behind the western hills that he came to me and placed his hands upon my shoulders, fatherly fashion. "He's sinking rapidly, Emily, and he knows it. He has asked to see Una, for the last time. After that it would be best if she were taken to her room; if she were asleep—when—"

His statement that the end was so near frightened me. "I will call her, Doctor," I stammered, "but please take her in. I couldn't stand it. I shall see him afterward, alone."

Some time later, when my little one had been tucked away for the night, I went to the porch and, huddled in the shadows, waited for the dread summons to bid a final farewell to the one who soon was to pass to the great beyond, leaving behind him only wasted years. And, almost unconsciously, my eyes turned southward toward the great city, as if I hoped to glimpse it through the twilight's haze. And I wondered if I had not misjudged it.

The curtain of darkness was just beginning to fall when an automobile swung to the gate with a creaking of brakes and a flash of lights, and I gave a cry of joyful surprise as a form I would have known in a million raced up the walk. The next moment my beloved husband held me in his arms.

THE glad greeting over, my mind flashed to the man inside; the one whose presence I dreaded confiding to Clifford. Then intuition told me his unexpected return was because of my housing of—that other one, though I was certain my letter could not have reached him before he left the city.

"Don't worry, Emily," he said gently, seeming to read my thoughts. "Everything will come out all right."

"You know then?" I gasped.

"Not much. But I received a telegram, unsigned, advising me to come home at once; that an unknown man was being harbored here. That meant that something was amiss with you and I took the first train so as to be here and stand by you. You know, little woman, I trust you absolutely. If there is someone here there must be a good reason. Tell me all that has happened."

His faith and his kindness were too much for me; with my head upon his shoulder I gave full vent to the flood of tears which I had been holding back for

days. When finally I was able to speak, I told him the whole miserable story, from the moment of my first husband's coming—that he was dying and had but an hour or two to live.

"You did the right thing, Emily, absolutely. I would have done the same had I been here. Nothing must happen now to add to the regrets of one who is going without opportunity to atone. Let us go to him together, make him understand that we cherish no bitterness."

As we crossed the threshold I noted the peculiar look which Dr. Sweetland flashed upon Clifford. He stepped aside and my husband, catching sight of the man upon the bed, gave a startled cry: "My God, John, I don't understand." For a full minute there was silence, so tense it hurt. Then the sick man, a faint flush coming into his wasted cheeks, extended his hand.

"I didn't know you were coming, Cliff, but forgive me. For a long time I have known that Emily was your wife, but I did nothing to disturb your happiness; I wouldn't have come now—only it is so near the end—and I wanted so much to see—" He stammered and stopped. The steel nerve which had sustained him so long was breaking.

"Everything's all right, John," and Cliff stepped to the bedside and placed his hand over the fevered one of the other. "Just take things easy." Then, as the man closed his eyes, a smile twitching the corners of his mouth, my husband turned to Dr. Sweetland. "Does Uncle Reuben know? Have you sent for him?"

AS THE physician shook his head, the explanation of it all came upon me with a rush which made me faint and dazed by its awful import. The man I had known as George Gale was the wayward son of Reuben Asher. He was the runaway whose conduct had embittered the older man until prejudice held him slave. And he also was responsible for most of the agonies which had made me rebel against the city and for the torments I had suffered after coming to Seaport in search of happiness. I turned away lest my features betray the bitterness of my thoughts.

Then I realized that Dr. Sweetland was speaking. "No, Clifford, I have sent for no one. I knew John the moment I saw him, but he pledged me to secrecy—because Emily did not know the truth; because he feared the coming of his father here would cause her more trouble."

"Very well," replied Cliff. "But we mustn't think of ourselves now. I shall go for my uncle." However, as he arose, a sudden crash of the knocker offered me an excuse to escape momentarily from the bewilderment of the sick room. But I started back amazed as I swung wide the door, for the white and contorted face of Reuben Asher was before me, with a sinister light in his eyes.

"I understand my nephew has returned," he snarled. "I want to see him. I'm going to find out about the queer goings-on here."

For an instant I was tempted to strike back; to bring the intruder to his knees. But I couldn't. Revenge at a moment like that was hideous.

"Well, I'm waiting." Reuben was speaking again, his tone an angry rasp. But before I could reply Dr. Sweetland stepped from a door at our side and grasped the man roughly by the arm. Asher swung angrily, but something in the cold gaze of the physician robbed him of his accustomed aggressiveness and his face assumed the lines and color of frightened indecision.

"You lower your voice and listen to me," said the physician. "If you knew all I do you'd be on your knees begging this woman's pardon."

Reuben jerked from the other's grasp.

"What do you mean? Are you crazy?"

Just then Clifford hastened toward us. "Quick, or you'll be too late," he gasped. "Come," said the doctor, again taking Reuben by the arm. "The man in there has but a few moments to live. He wants to see you, Reuben Asher, and you must see him—before he goes."

The doctor drew Reuben into the room beyond, and the door closed upon them. A deadening silence for a moment; next a low rumbling, the echo of short quick sentences. Then an agonized cry—the most awful I ever had heard—the cry of a stubborn man suddenly stricken, brought face to face with bitter retribution. We turned toward the open, followed by the terrifying sobs of an old man who, too late, was being made to realize that the one being on earth whom he really had loved despite his denials was being taken from him.

With Cliff's arms about me, we stole through the garden to a little arbor, where the moonbeams filtered softly through the honeysuckle.

After a time, it might have been hours, the figures of Reuben Asher and Dr. Sweetland appeared in the doorway, then passed down the gravel, the older man bowed and broken.

"He is gone, Clifford," said the doctor, as my husband stepped from the shadow of our retreat. "I shall send someone at once. Good-night."

As their figures faded into the blackness beyond the hedge, Cliff returned to my side. "And now, little Emily?" he queried.

"I understand what you mean," I replied. "We shall go back—to the city—soon. To a little home in the Village, with red geraniums in the boxes at the windows, where the sun shines warm through the skylight."

YES, Cliff," I told him. "I have learned my lesson. I know now it was not the city that was cruel; it was just my disappointments which made me so bitter against it—against all cities. And it is not the country which has been unkind to me; just a man who was prejudiced and unfair. We must go back to those whose ways we know and understand. But some day we shall come to the country again, and then my dream really will come true."

On the morning of our departure, as we stood upon the platform—Cliff, with the little one clasped in his arms, Dr. Sweetland, and I—noting the approach of the train and exchanging final hand-clasps, one of the town boys raced up with a great bunch of white roses and a letter which he thrust into my hands. Believing they were from friends, I gave them but passing heed until we were well on our journey; until we had left behind forever the outermost boundaries of the place to which I had come with such high hopes, but which I was leaving with no regrets. Then from the envelope I drew a single sheet, across which was written in a scrawling, trembling hand:

My dear Emily:

Please accept the flowers as a token from a broken old man who is suffering more than you can know for the injuries he has done to his own and to you. If your bitterness is not too great, forgive me, as I am praying God to do. Perhaps, some day, when time has blunted your memories of the present, you will let me see my little grandchild. You have much to live for. Be merciful to one who hasn't even a future to dream about.

Reuben Asher.

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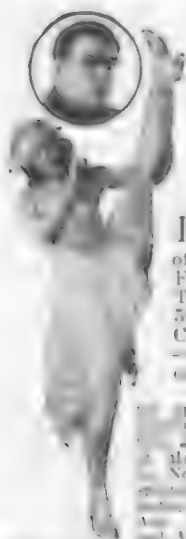
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Judgment of the Jungle

[Continued from page 40]

as it really was. I was David's wife; deep in my heart I knew that, much as I hated him, there was something which would keep me from ever really betraying him while I lived in his house and bore his name. Was it worth while risking the terrible consequences of his anger for a man who could never be more to me than a friend?

Regretfully, I shook my head. Life without Andy looked very bare and colorless, but it was to tell him that we mustn't meet any more that I next drove to Crystal Cove.

"So this is the end," Andy and I were sitting together in the sand. As far as the eye could reach, there was nothing to be seen except great waves combing in on a deserted shore. Suddenly his hands gripped mine. "Why can't it be the beginning, dear?" His face bent over me, tense and white, the boyish look completely gone.

I stirred uneasily. "What do you mean?"

"I mean I want you. You're not happy, Elinor. I can see it in the droop of your dear mouth, in your eyes. Why go on with things as they are? God meant you for my playmate, dear. Come away with me. Let me try to give you—"

"Andy! My husband would never let me get a divorce; I've no real cause—"

I was trying desperately to pull my hands away, aghast before the storm in my own heart that Andy's flushed face and burning eyes aroused. At the same time, I felt a sense of triumph against David because another man's fiercely possessive touch was able to send the blood surging through my veins. I laughed shakily. "Don't make me dream dreams, my dear."

"Why must they be dreams?" Andy loosed my hands, but his voice was urgent and warm as he stretched himself again beside me in the sand. "I'm a rich man—didn't you know? My uncle died and left me his money."

"DuVries at the hotel has a yacht he wants to sell. Suppose I buy her and we slip aboard some night, and upsail and away? You won't need a divorce. On the other side of the world, no one will know or care."

His soothing voice flowed on and on, making the mad plan seem practical. Before my fascinated eyes swam a vision of a new life with Andy in an old-world civilization by the sea.

SUDDENLY I noticed that the shadows of the tall trees behind us were lengthening across the sand. I sprang up. "Andy, I've got to go! No—don't ask me any more today. I'll tell you next time—"

Andy was breathing quickly as he rose, but I could see he felt sure of me. "All right. But I'll buy the yacht, anyway. Then all you'll have to do will be to send me the one word, 'Come.' I'll come and get you, and we can slip down to the inlet and go aboard."

Would I have decided to go with Andy if it had not been for what happened that night? I don't know. My mind was in such a turmoil when I got home that I did not notice David's guns were standing in the hall. If I had asked about them, I would have learned that he had been called back from the woods that morning to perform an emergency operation on an old friend at Crystal Cove. I would have been prepared for the shock of finding he had caught a glimpse of me and Andy in the yellow car—that he had made inquiries—that he knew—



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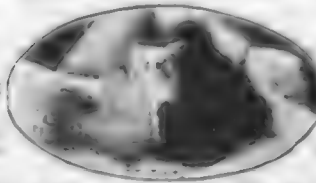
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As it was, I sat like a frozen woman that night at dinner while his cold hard voice flayed me with deadly words. There was no hint of love or grief in his rage—only bitter, overpowering, outraged will and pride. How long it lasted, I do not know. It was his last words that roused me to life: "And if you ever so much as speak to Anderson Holt again, I will kill you or him—or both."

The candles had burned down to their sockets when at last I rose. My mind was made up. I owed him nothing—this man who insulted and disregarded me; whose egoism alone demanded my loyalty. I would go where love called, where life was gay and free!

A violent shiver passed over me. Dreadful dangers lay between me and the shelter of Andy's yacht. As I remembered David's stern cold face, his unyielding voice, his icy will, I felt a cowardly impulse to abandon everything and drag out my life in safety, an unloved and unloving wife. But pride stiffened me. I began to plan. After all, David did not dream I contemplated running away. He would prevent my going to Crystal Cove again, but if Andy came for me, surely I could slip out. Once in the yellow car and speeding toward the inlet, we would be safe.

I scarcely knew which it was I thought of most, my love for Andy or my hate for David, as I crept down to the mailbox and posted a letter to Andy, saying, "Come."

THE woods were very dark as I hurried through them toward the bend in the jungle road where Andy's car was waiting for me. I had said good-night to David very early, leaving him reading. Alone in my room, I had locked my door, put a few things into a small bag, and, crawling out onto the low veranda roof, dropped to the ground. I felt reasonably safe. David was on the other side of the house. The dark servants had gone home to their shacks in the pine woods. I moved cautiously away from the house, feeling a queer pang of regret at leaving Dark Water. Then, finding my feet on the smooth pineneedle road, I ran.

A man's figure brought me up short, as it stepped from behind a tree.

"Andy! I told you not to come so near the house," I whispered fiercely. At that instant, the moon broke through the clouds, and I saw bent above me David's blazing eyes.

That moment seemed like an eternity. I felt my knees sag under me, my breathing stop. Then, even as David's arm shot forward to grip me, I had ducked, flung myself to one side, sprung past him, and was running, running, running down the road.

There had been no mistaking the menace in David's gaze. I fled from him in mortal terror of my life. As I heard his heavy feet pound after me, I could almost feel his hands closing about my throat.

I had no breath to scream with as he gained upon me, as his hands clutched my waist and shoulder, as he jerked me back. A half a mile away, Andy was waiting for me with his car. And here, in the warm, living darkness, I was biting, scuffling, panting—fighting with my husband for my life.

The unequal struggle could not last. I felt my body grow limp in David's strong arms. A little hissing "Ah" of triumph escaped his lips. For a long moment he held me motionless against his hard chest. Somewhere a nightbird called; I heard the sharp whirring of a locust almost in my ear. Then suddenly I felt a queer jar run through David's body; his grip relaxed. "Stand still," he whispered hoarsely, and swung around us the beam of his electric torch.

Suddenly it came to rest. My lips parted in a soundless scream. As if from the center of a spotlight, evil, unblinking eyes in a motionless V-indented head were staring up at me. Behind the lowered head rose the thick, mottled coils of a great rattlesnake, its many-buttoned tail upraised again in that loud locust-like whirr. I stared back fascinated as step by step David drew me away. Then I turned to face him—and there was no one there! Suddenly I saw him crouched beside me in the road.

I was kneeling beside him, the flashlight in my hand. Yes, there they were—two tiny needlelike punctures on David's bare ankle, each one oozing its one bright drop of blood. Before I had seen it, the snake had struck. I felt an instant's panic—then my nurse's instincts rose. I whipped a lace from David's shoe and made a tourniquet to keep his blood from carrying the deadly poison through his veins. With his knife, I slashed the dreadful little wound four times. I would have set my lips to it, but he jerked back my head. "No! If there is any cut or abrasion in your mouth, you will die." As I worked, I was conscious in every nerve of that lurking horror so near us in the road.

"Is it good-by?" David's face was deathly pale, his eyes dilated, and he was obviously suffering horribly, but his lips wore a mocking smile as I finished my work and he caught the glance I cast down the road in the direction of Andy's car. "You needn't be afraid of the snake, you know. It's probably crawled back into the underbrush by now. They seldom strike unless disturbed. Go to your lover; I'm powerless to prevent you now."

I ignored the gibe. "Can you stand?" I gave him my shoulder, but he sank back, shaking his head.

"My foot's numb already from the tourniquet."

"I'll get the car."

It was only a short distance to the house, but as I ran through the darkness, casting the flashlight before me, I had time to think of the dreadful situation in which I found myself. What an end to my plans! I couldn't leave David now; there was no one at home but me. If I deserted him, he would die. But if he lived—I! I shivered. What would our life together be? He was not a man to forget that I had tried to leave him for another. Even in his helpless condition, I was afraid of him.

IT WAS the simple, primary duty of saving life, too strong to resist, that sent me flying back to our garage and forced me to the front seat of the car and my hands to the wheel.

"Thanks to your prompt action, your husband has a chance to live." It was old Dr. Eliot of Crystal Cove who spoke to me hours later in the day. I had just awakened from the heavy sleep into which I had fallen that morning, after help came and I had given David into other hands. "You can see him now. He's asking for you. But don't be frightened if he's not quite himself. It's the fever."

I nodded understandingly. I had expected delirium. But I had not expected, as I drew near my husband's room, to hear his voice ringing down the corridor, "Elinor—Elinor—"

"I'm here. It's Elinor." I felt an odd tightening in my heart as I bent over him. His face was drawn and haggard, but illness had wiped out its hard lines; his eyes, full of blank suffering, stared up at me. I could see no trace here of the man who had leaned toward me across the dinner table, uttering threats; no trace, even, of the man who had mocked me in the woods while facing death. He clutched my fingers feverishly, and murmuring, "Elinor—my

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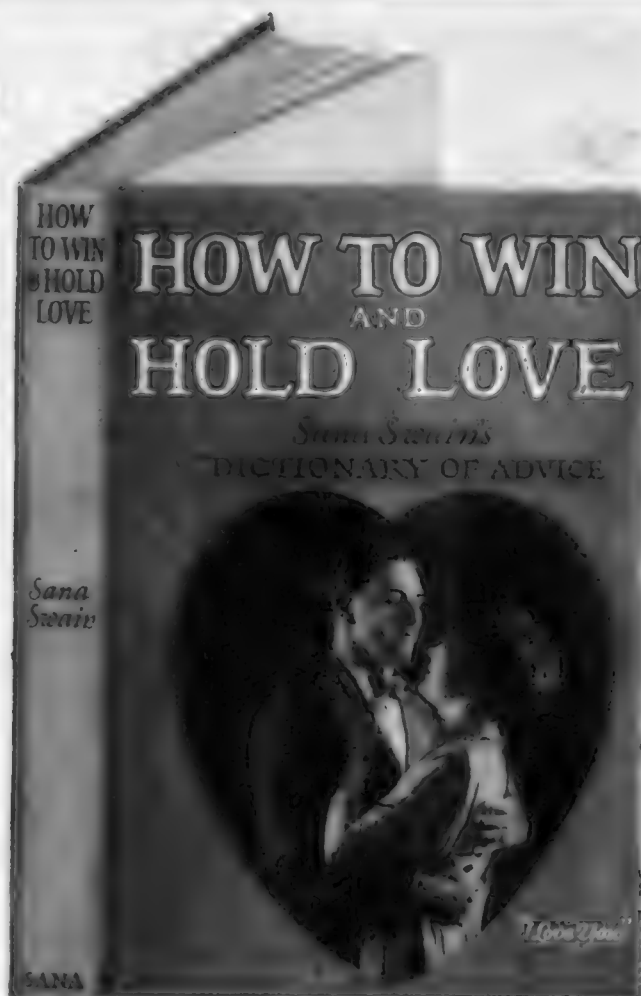
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It David loved me! The thought was like a searchlight turned on my heart, in its brightness I knew that my hate for David had been only love turned aside on itself. If he were to die now, before I knew—

Madness seemed to grip me at the thought. The doctor found me outside David's door, a crumpled figure on the floor, when he came out, saying, "He will live."

There is not much to tell after that. In the long days of convalescence David bared his heart to me. He had loved me from the first moment he saw me, while he was still pledged to Dorothy Manville. Then suddenly he had been released.

Gently I drew that story from him, one beautiful spring afternoon. He had always had a terrible temper, inherited from his grandfather. As he walked toward the clubhouse that August morning, he had heard two caddies talking behind a hedge, telling a vile tale. Then he had caught his fiancée's name. He had had but one thought as he leaped the hedge—to punish an infamous lie. And then from Dorothy Manville's own lips, in her terror at what had happened, he had learned that the tale was true. Honor had kept him silent, even while the whole city rang with his name. He had married me, still scared from the shock of that disillusionment. And then, I had seemed to turn from him.

"That was when my mother's letter came," I put in, remembering.

And he had sunk deeper and deeper into himself, too proud to ask me for the love that was his by right. In the blackness of the world around him those days, all the evil forces in his nature had had full play. He had abandoned himself to his wild heritage. But, "That is ended," he told me, a look of grave resolution in his face. "There is a devil in my blood, but I can worst him with your love helping me!" With a sob of thankfulness, I laid my head against his breast.

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For
Children
Also

Doctors' Wives

[Continued from page 43]

away. I was curious, too, about the confession he had to make and accordingly told him he could come for a short call.

About twenty minutes later, as I was running a comb through my hair, I heard voices on the stairs, and running out, I beheld George and Ralph walking up arm in arm, like the best of pals.

There was a pleased smile on his face. "Here's an unexpected visitor, dear," he said, drawing his arm affectionately across my shoulders. "You remember Dr. Chase, don't you? He dropped in to see me for a moment and thought he'd like to come up to greet you. I'll leave you here, then, for a little chat with my wife," to George. "Busy as usual downstairs. Come in again, Chase."

CERTAINLY George had no idea what he was doing by thus giving this "unexpected" visitor the freedom of the house. How simple my husband was! How trusting!

When Ralph and I were alone, we regarded each other in guilty silence. Partners in an unworthy conspiracy, we shared a secret from which George was shut out. Dimly realizing that this was disloyal, yet lacking the courage to tell George the truth, I knew that I would let the matter drift.

Ralph was looking around him with that teasing, laughing expression in his face. He was the same as he always was, the blond aristocrat, with wavy hair combed straight back, and eyes half mocking, half beseeching.

"So—" he mused, "a little lady married to a big doctor, eh?"

There was something so sad in the way he said this that I felt sorry for him. Although Ralph had never indicated to me that he loved me well enough to marry me, he had managed to convey to me over the telephone that my marriage was a great disappointment to him. Now he created this impression again, and as a woman always likes to believe that an old admirer still finds her desirable, my sympathy went out to him.

Probably he saw this in my eyes, for when I asked him to tell me what he had come for, he begged me first to forgive him before he started.

"But how can I?" I laughed. "I don't know what you've done."

With charming ease, he pulled over a low stool and sat down at my feet.

"Please, Hester. Just say you will."

I was full of curiosity. I promised I would. In that moment he looked at least four years younger than the twenty-six he claimed, and to forgive some imaginary crime did not seem very hard.

"Hester," he began, "do you remember, about six months ago, whether or not your father ever received an anonymous letter telling him you were having an affair with—with your husband?"

Remember? As if I ever could forget! For the minute I thought he had come with some news of my father from whom I had not heard since that morning.

"Was he angry at you, Hester?"

"He put me out," I said quietly. "But how do you happen to know anything about it?"

"He put you out?" repeated Ralph aghast. "My God! And what did you do?"

"I married Dr. Draper that morning."

"I see," he said. "I see." Then he broke out hotly. "Hester, please don't be angry with me. I was desperate because you wouldn't talk to me that night. And I thought I didn't have a ghost of a chance with George in the running. And so—it

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was a rotten thing to do—I sent your father that letter."

For the first few seconds I could not grasp the force of his confession. When I did, I could not decide if I ought to be shocked. Certainly it was amazing and confusing, but what did it matter who had sent it?

If I became angry, Ralph would believe just what I did not want him to believe—that I had married George because there was no other way out. Yet it was a cowardly thing to have done, and certainly such procedure should not be accepted.

I wanted to punish him somehow, so I let him beg and plead for my forgiveness, until finally I took pity on him and, laughing, remarked that George and I would have been married sooner or later anyway, and he really did us a favor.

Half an hour later, chatting gaily, Ralph and I went down together to George's office. By this time I had really persuaded myself that Ralph was not so bad. I believed just what I wanted to believe, and so I saw in him a prospect of relief.

"Dr. Chase is going uptown," I told George, "and he's offered to drop me at the Auxiliary tea. Do you mind?"

"Go, by all means," urged George heartily, as I knew he would. There was no jealousy in his soul. "And if you see Mrs. Stokes, will you tell her I'll be glad to make the opening speech at the bazaar next month?"

"So you're going to the bazaar," remarked Ralph, handing me into his car as of old.

"Yes, if George doesn't find some sick cat that needs attention," I replied without thinking.

"I suppose he hasn't much time for social obligations."

Little fool that I was, I played into his hands. "Much? Not any at all."

Ralph laughed peculiarly as the car rolled forward. "George always was a great one for work. You like the lights, though, don't you, Hester? And music and laughter—"

Ralph Chase had already begun to "understand" me.

I reached home at about five-thirty, for a change, flushed with happiness. While I was drawing off my gloves, Miss Henderson, George's secretary knocked at the door.

"Dr. Draper sent this up," she said, handing me a package. "He told me to say that he bought it for you on the way back from the hospital."

I thanked her curtly, and opening the package found in it a book I had expressed a desire for. George was very thoughtful that way. Several times a week he stopped to get things for me—books, magazines, candy.

Now I wonder how he managed to carry these details on his mind. But then it just provoked me that he should send the gift up with her instead of bringing it himself.

Although she was always most friendly to me, I hated that Miss Henderson. I noticed that she still wore her starched white coat, which meant that work was not yet finished downstairs, and George would be late coming up. I disliked everybody and everything connected with this profession of his that separated us, but most of all I detested this girl.

But where was I in all this hubbub and bustle? I seemed to have no place. I did not believe that any girl could be closely associated with George and not feel his power as I had felt it. And she was pretty, too.

SHE sat in the intimacy of his small office taking down his words. She opened his mail every morning. She knew who wrote to him and what they wrote. She had access to his personal accounts.

But where was I in all this hubbub and bustle? I seemed to have no place. I did not believe that any girl could be closely associated with George and not feel his power as I had felt it. And she was pretty, too.

Why had he sent the book up with that hateful girl? After this afternoon's small but significant deceit, I should have been grateful for any evidence of faith. Only the habit of hunting out grievances had fastened its hold on me to such an extent that I always believed George to be in the wrong no matter what happened.

Working myself into a fine fury, I burst out while we were in front of the fire.

"I hate Miss Henderson," I said to George, with feeling.

"She seems a pleasant sort," he remarked. "And she's certainly the best secretary I've ever had. What's wrong with her?"

WHAT could I say? "She—she looks so queer," I explained vaguely.

"Does she?" To tell you the truth I've never looked at her carefully. I don't think I would know her if I met her outside the office.

For a moment these words stunned me. Then I began to wonder. Was it possible that George had really not noticed this girl's sparkle and dash; that he regarded her more or less as an animated dictaphone? Were there men like that? It seemed unbelievable.

"Did you enjoy the tea this afternoon?" George continued casually.

"It was delightful. I delivered your message to Mrs. Stokes."

"And was Chase—" I thought he hesitated here. "—friendly?"

Now precisely what did he mean by that? It half amused me, half angered me. Was he trying to force details out of me? It came to my mind that he might be jealous. Almost I hoped he was. It might rouse him to realize his neglect of me.

"I don't see what you mean," I said.

"Well—you know Chase was quite the philanderer when he was here with me. That was really why I asked him to go."

"You sent him away?"

"Yes, after that affair with your appointment. I don't suppose you remember it. He was always flirting with the patients. I didn't like it."

"Oh, if you mean that way," I said demurely, of course he was perfectly respectable.

"I thought he acted with more dignity. When you're in private practice, even if your father is a rich man, you've got to drop all that nonsense."

I decided that George had no jealousy in his soul. He was just rambling on, as a man will to his wife. Would he have brought Ralph upstairs and left him alone with me, if he felt that way?

And strangely enough, these things that he said of Ralph did not alter my opinion of him. True, he had told me another story of his separation from George. And it was rather a jolt to hear that he flirted with the patients, but a girl always believes that a man may be flippant with other women but that he means what he says when he is with her.

I did not really think that I was deceiving George. My husband had no time for me. Then what was the harm in being friends with someone who did?

Besides, Ralph and I never met without George's knowledge. If he called for me at the house, he always stopped in first to see my husband. When we met outside, as we did frequently, he would come in to greet George on our return.

"Just happened across Mrs. Draper," he'd say smoothly, "so I gave her a lift."

And George would be so pleased that others were showing me the consideration due his wife!

I saw no reason for telling George every detail of my life. He kept many things from me. I had no idea why Myra Roberts still visited him once a week regularly.

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These were professional secrets that a man ought never tell his wife, he would say. Indeed, I did not know either why all these other furred and jewelled and gowned women were coming to him.

They always pounced on me in the hall to tell me how they worshiped my husband. What did I care? I recalled that conversation I had once overheard between Myra and Alice Kielson in which the former had said that one did not have to be ill to consult Dr. Draper.

I myself had first gone to him just out of curiosity—with no honest complaint. Might not most of these women have come the same way, too?

Even when I entered the reception room at night, their shadows seemed to flock around me, to envy me, to taunt me, to mock me because I did not know what they knew.

I would have scorned the mention of jealousy on my part. These were the people that prevented him from being my playmate. The thought of them infuriated me, and when Ralph caught me in this mood, I was just clay in his hands.

* * * * *

As soon as Ralph Chase came back into my life, to be a daily witness to what I called George's indifference, I liked to fancy that the situation was becoming unbearable.

Not that I had a definite solution for it. I wanted to have my cake and eat it, too. Secretly I was enjoying Ralph's companionship too much to make any drastic move that would terminate it. At the same time, I was married to George, and there were still days when he exercised that old quiet fascination over me.

IT WAS an old habit of mine, this indecision, this aversion to crossing the bridge until the torrent beneath was threatening its safety. I had delayed once before. I was destined to do so again.

Still, I kept looking for an opportunity for a scene with George. I am sure at that time he had no idea that I considered myself unhappy. Often I would burst out, but George would be so amazed, so shocked, yet so patient, that my grievances evaporated before I could air them. Anyhow, he misjudged me. He had faith in his first opinion of me, and I was not big enough to rise to that opinion.

The first chance came on the night of the Ladies' Auxiliary bazaar. Not only was it one of the big charity affairs, but one of the prominent social affairs as well. As I was to sell flowers, I had had a beautiful evening gown made, an earth-brown shimmering garment to match my hair and emphasize the blue in my eyes. One does look better on certain nights than on others, and that night I know I looked my best. About my throat I wore a very odd Oriental necklace of some strange metal, a gift from George.

The evening did not start out in any way that would make me believe it would have such a disastrous end. Ralph called for us in his car at his own suggestion. George had no machine. We would have taken a taxi but it seemed jollier this way, so he accepted Ralph's offer.

I felt gay and light-hearted. George made an exceptionally fine figure in full dress. Ralph offered sufficient contrast to both of us. George's speech was simple, sincere, and touching, and that instant sales began; I had more than I could handle.

The world was a mad whirl, of people passing to and fro in hordes; of music, and laughter and faint perfumes. George introduced me to many of his associates. Wherever the name of "Draper" was mentioned, I found people regarding me in cool approval. I knew I could stand any scrutiny.



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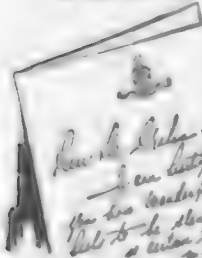
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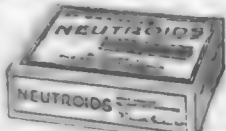
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Now that George was actually here with me, and I could see him greeting friends, stopping to chat, or passing impartially from one booth to the next to make a purchase at each one, I did not care whether or not he kept at my side. Enough that he had left his work for the evening to be my escort.

Imagine my surprise when, at about ten o'clock, he came over hurriedly and, with a steady glow in his eyes that I had not seen there when we started out, said:

"Stokes tells me there's a peculiar case at the hospital, brought in after my evening visit. I'd like to run over to see the woman. It won't take more than an hour. Do you mind, dear?"

I WAS surprised, as I say, but not angered. First of all, he had asked me if I minded, and that meant a great deal. Then, too, I was satisfied with the attention I was getting, and the praise for my rapid sales, and I felt that sort of expansive mood in which I was willing to have him enjoy himself in his own fashion.

"It won't take more than an hour," he apologized. "You will probably be busy here until long after midnight, anyway."

"I'm having a wonderful time, George," were my parting words.

Ralph had scarcely come near me all night, but somehow, the instant my husband was gone, he was at my elbow.

"I'm deserted again for an hour or so," I laughed confidently, believing so implicitly that George would return for me.

I did not notice the passage of time. Quite early, it seemed to me, a messenger came around asking me to turn my receipts over to the chairman. It was one-thirty, and George was nowhere in sight.

It came over me with a sense of shock that he had done as he always did. This night was no different from other nights. Suddenly I felt weary, and exhausted. I needed assistance to walk down the length of the hallroom where the booths were erected.

I felt Ralph beside me, and, reaching out, I leaned on his steady arm. We were even closer than we usually were when we danced together. My arm pressing against his was warm, tingling. He understood!

There was mute sympathy in his eyes. "I guess George was detained," he said softly.

"Somehow, he usually is," was my sharp retort.

As he helped me into his car, he put his arm about my waist, and I was grateful for the support. Just once Ralph broke the tense silence.

"I wish I could do something to help you, Hester," he cried with meaning.

By this time, the situation had maddened me. "Oh, I'll do enough!" I assured him.

Arriving home a half-hour after I did, George found me savagely pulling my dresses from the closets.

"What's happened?" he cried aghast.

"I'm taking the guest-room across the hall," I said. I thought then that I was cool, but of course it was just white hot fury that made me act this way.

"Are you ill, Hester?"

I faced him wildly, with my arms full of the trinkets his generosity had provided for me.

"No, I'm just sick of it; sick of being deserted like a waif. Always imposing on somebody else to take me home. If you had no time for me, you shouldn't have married me!"

George came closer and tried to take me in his arms. "I'm sorry," he began. "Only that woman—"

"Don't touch me!" I shrieked. "That woman! You and your women! Always some other woman who needs you before I do. Don't touch me, I tell you! You reek in women! You've got the touch of

some other woman on you every time you come to me. Their ghosts follow you around, right into the room with you. Let me pass."

I dashed by him, tears blinding my eyes, and locked myself in the guest-room.

Twice that night George knocked at my door and called, "Hester! Hester!" but I pretended to be asleep. The next morning when I knew that it was time for him to go off to the hospital, I came out.

Just as I finished dressing, Ralph appeared. For a wordless interval we regarded each other. Some strange bond seemed to draw us together. My eyes held a desperate appeal. Then quietly he crossed the room and, crushing me to him, pressed his lips against mine.

Careless of George, careless of discovery, careless of everything! He was so bold and reckless!

"If only I could take you away somewhere!" he whispered. I could almost feel the fire of his spirit blazing through his veins. My heart throbbed in answer. "Where would you take me—if you did?" I murmured.

"Anywhere," he cried. "Anywhere. We could travel with the wind."

Then he stepped back. "But you are George Draper's wife."

"Yes, by law. But how can I remain the wife of a man who does not understand me? Perhaps when he has lost me he will appreciate what he has lost."

Oh, I was mad; I was irresponsible. I did not know what I was doing. I had the idea that I could just rush off with Ralph, provoke George, and have him come after me in repentance.

Practically under my husband's gaze, Ralph bundled me out into his car. We set off at breakneck speed. I seemed to be in a stupor. Somewhere along the road, rain began to fall.

Up the river we went, pounding, rushing, throbbing through towns and cities, past lonely villages, through densely wooded, uninhabited stretches.

"With the wind!" Ralph had said.

Quicker than the wind, we went, stopping neither for refreshment nor rest. I had no clear idea of what I was doing, except that I was punishing George. Through the daze, Ralph seemed tender and careful as ever. Towards evening, I felt tired, so tired. My head drooped on to his shoulder.

"Can't we stop somewhere, Ralph?"

"We'll be there soon, little lady," he said.

"Where?"

"There is a place I know along here. I think we had better stop."

And presently we did, turning in at a sweeping driveway, and drawing up at a long, low, rambling house. I could not see anything. Everything dripped with rain. As we entered a bright, warm entrance hall, where fur rugs hung on the walls, and open fires snapped and crackled, a portly man advanced towards us.

"DR. CHASE," he said in friendly greeting, "shall I show you and Mrs. Chase right up to your room? I've had it reserved since last week, when you wired."

With a start I came to myself. Room—Mrs. Chase—last week—! Whatever was this man talking about?

"How could you have wired last week," I said, puzzled, "when we only decided to come this morning?" And as I turned I caught these two men exchanging a glance.

Ralph had laid his finger in warning against his lips. The other nodded in accord.

There I stood—motionless.

Although I had intercepted the gesture of warning, and was determined to get at the bottom of it, I was still bent on punishing George.

[To be concluded]

A Little Bit of French

[Continued from page 35]

before then. Think it over, Frenchy, dear."

I thought it over. I was still thinking it over when Ernest's cousin arrived from the West. He was a healthy-looking youth, tall and well set up, and he had a shock of very bright red hair. He also had a very winning way and an excellent sense of humor. Rather sullenly, Ernie invited him to share his apartment while he was in town. It was then thought that he would stop over in New York only a few days. He was scheduled to go across with a new unit of the French Ambulance Corps, and was waiting until the usual red tape had been unwound. We became very well acquainted. Ernest had been working nights to make the leap from production clerk to copy writer at the agency, and Joe and I saw a good deal of each other.

"I'm not a redhead," he told me one night. "This hair of mine's more of a pink, don't you think?"

I thought he was serious, and I turned him around to the light to report on the color of his hair. As I did, he pulled me toward him and kissed me.

"You remind me of those healthy American girls back home," he said. "I'll bet you've fed the cows many a time, haven't you?"

I BLUSHED very easily in those days, despite my affectation of jadedness. I didn't want to look like a healthy American girl, and I didn't want anyone wagering that I'd fed the cows. It was true—that's why I felt so angry about it, I guess.

"You fellows make me tired," I retorted. "Here you know me only a little while and you get fresh and kiss me. Men are all alike."

"What do you know about men?" he asked, with a wide smile. "You're too good a girl to pull those cynical lines. Listen, girlie; let's go to the movies or somewhere. I haven't got long to stay in this town and I want to make the most of it."

I liked the movies and I liked Joe, so I was soon persuaded. We went to a big Broadway theatre, then danced for an hour and ended up at a little side-street restaurant. Full of affectations myself, I think it was Joe's entire absence of any pose which made me like him more than any fellow I had ever met. He went through no heroics in connection with his plan to go ambulance-driving. He was just going over to have some fun and excitement, he said, and if he could be of some service to humanity, all the better.

Joe bought an evening paper, one of the late war extras, and since we had rather talked ourselves out, calmly read the war news while we were waiting for our orders. The bulletins from the front were dished up in big scarlet headlines. The Germans were still flinging their great trained hordes at Verdun.

The steaks came, and we started on them. Joe ordered a couple of cocktails. He seemed to assume that this one little appetizer apiece was quite sufficient.

"You're so different from your cousin," I remarked. "Ernie wouldn't stop at one cocktail. He'd try to drink up the whole place."

"That's fair enough," he answered. "All I want is one. You can have another if you feel like it."

"Oh, I don't want any more. I was just talking," I said. "I suppose Ernie's life in Paris has had its influence on him, don't you think?"

"Paris?" he echoed, with a puzzled look. "What Paris? Do you mean Paris, Illinois?"

"There's only one real Paris," I replied, haughtily. "That's the one you're going

Did You Ever Take an INTERNAL Bath?

By T. A. BALLANTYNE

This may seem a strange question.

But if you want to magnify your energy—sharpen your brain to razor edge—put a glorious sparkle in your eye—pull yourself up to a health level where you can laugh at disease and glory in vitality—you're going to read this message to the last line.

I speak from experience. It was a message just such as this that dynamited me out of the slough of dullness and wretched health into the sunlit atmosphere of happiness, vitality and vigor. To me, and no doubt to you, an Internal Bath was something that had never come within my sphere of knowledge.

So I tore off a coupon similar to the one shown below. I wanted to find out what it was all about. And back came a booklet. This booklet was named "Why We Must Bathe Internally." It was just choked with common sense and facts.

What is an Internal Bath?

This was my first shock. Vaguely I had an idea that an internal bath was an enema. Or by a stretch of the imagination a new-fangled laxative. In both cases I was wrong. A real, genuine, true internal bath is no more like an enema than a kite is like an airplane. The only similarity is the employment of water in each case. And so far as laxatives are concerned, I learned one thing—to abstain from them completely.

A bona fide internal bath is the administration into the intestinal tract of pure, warm water sterilized by a marvelous antiseptic tonic. The appliance that holds the liquid and injects it is the J. B. L. Cascade, the invention of that eminent physician, Dr. Charles A. Tyrrell, who perfected it to save his own life. Now here's where the genuine internal bath differs radically from the enema.

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These poisons are extremely insidious. The headaches you get—the skin blemishes—the fatigue—the mental sluggishness—the susceptibility to colds—and countless other ills are directly due to the presence of these poisons in your system. They are the generic cause of premature old age, rheumatism, high blood pressure and many serious maladies.

Thus it is imperative that your system be free of these poisons. And the only sure and effective means is internal bathing. In fifteen minutes it flushes the intestinal tract of all impurities. And each treatment strengthens the intestinal muscles so the passage of waste is hastened.

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Taken just before retiring you will sleep like a child. You will rise with a vigor that is bubbling over. Your whole attitude toward life will be changed. All clouds will be laden with silver. You will feel rejuvenated—remade. That is not my experience alone—but those of 800,000 men and women who faithfully practice this wonderful inner cleanliness. Just one internal bath a week to regain and hold glorious vibrant health! To toss off the mantle of age—nervousness—and dull care! To fortify you against epidemics, colds, etc. Is that fifteen minutes worth while?

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It is entirely FREE. And I am absolutely convinced that you will agree you never used a two cent stamp to better advantage. There's a chapter in "Why We Should Bathe Internally" by Dr. Turner that is a revelation. There are letters from many who achieved results that seem miraculous. As an eye-opener on health, this booklet is worth many, many, many times the price of that two cent stamp. Use the convenient coupon below or address the Tyrrell Hygienic Institute, Dept. 203, 152 West 65th Street, New York City—Now.

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to—Paris, France." I acted this part well. "Why, bless your heart, Jackie," he laughed. "Ernie's never been to Paris. He's been kidding you. Ernie and I went to the same freshwater college in the middle west, and I've known every move he's made since he was a pup—that is, until he came to New York. He'll soon be going to Paris, though, if this row over there continues. I'll bet the United States'll be in this mess in less than a year."

Joe didn't make the remark cattishly. He assured me that Ernest was no end of a good fellow. "He just tells fanciful little tales now and then," he said, "but, then, I suppose we all do."

"I don't think you do, Joe," I told him. It was the first time I had ever called him Joe.

"Sure I do," he admitted. "Why, when I come back, I'll peddle around a lot of stories about being under heavy shell-fire and all that, and maybe I won't get near the front at all. I don't know."

Yes, Joe was something new for me. I had been spending months among people who had seldom "been themselves," as we say nowadays; actors who were acting off-stage as well as on; would-be painters and would-be writers. And a young fellow who had a sculptor's studio on the floor below Ernie talked more about armatures and modeling and wet-draperies than St. Gaudens himself could possibly have done.

"I guess I'll have another cocktail, at that, Joe," I decided. "You don't look like one of those black-mustached villains who would purposely get a girl intoxicated. I want that extra cocktail, Joe, and maybe still another one, for I've got something to tell you and I need a little extra courage."

There was a look of puzzlement, almost of fear, in Joe's straight-gazing dark-blue eyes.

"Lord, Jackie!" he whispered. "I hope it's nothing serious you've got to tell me."

"Not yet," I said. "But it may be before long. It's a step I've been considering."

Joe ordered the drink, and when the waiter brought it I gulped it and started to tell Joe about the proposition Ernest had made me. I remember I softened my own part in the story as much as possible.

"You know, I'm very lonely here in New York sometimes," I said, weakly. "Then, I'm of French descent, you know. The Latin spirit is in me. I have that abandon of my ancestors. I can't fight against that."

I felt that this was rather a good line. Apparently Joe was not at all impressed by it, though; neither was he shocked at what I told him.

"Why, it's your business, Jackie," he said, gravely, "but I wouldn't sit here and see my sister do a thing like that. A few years from now you'd be sure to regret it. I say you would and not 'you will,' for I am sure your common-sense will guide you. Remember, your father and mother back in Kansas are sending you what they can afford, to allow you to study music. Would it be fair to them? You could live with a man right back in Kansas. You wouldn't have to pay your fare to New York to do that, would you?"

IT WAS just the kind of a talk I needed: I but I was young, wilful, fed up on a great many fallacious ideas, I'm afraid. I respected Joe more than I did Ernie, but Joe was going away. I was going to be in Ernie's company almost every evening; and I had already learned the effect of his nearness. And that sky-bungalow was so cozy and so different, and I wanted to "live my own life" with my mythical French spirit and abandon.

I promised Joe I would not go through with the plan, but even then I didn't intend to keep my promise. Silly? Just a female Simple Simon. I didn't know it then.

I made Joe promise that he would say

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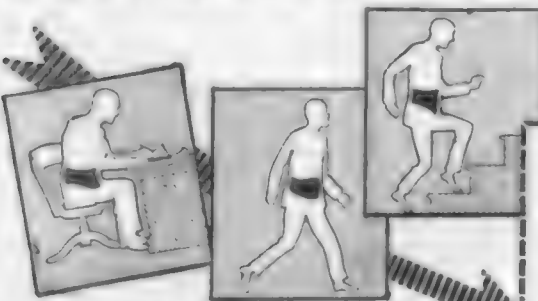
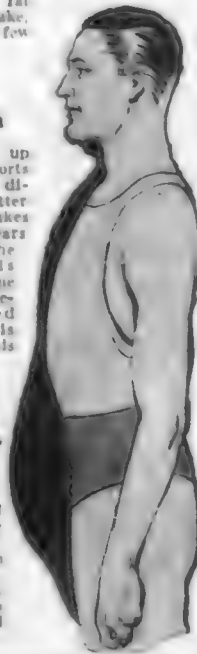
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nothing to Ernest. Joe's promise meant more than mine did. I met Ernest at breakfast the next morning, and I could tell from his attitude that there had been no conversation on the subject.

"Joe got orders to sail on the Baltic tomorrow morning," he told me. "The wire came this morning. You know what that'll mean, Frenchy. Extra room up in the crow's nest—our love nest. How about it, little Sappho?"

Joe came in to breakfast just then, and I didn't answer the question. The conversation swung around to Joe's coming adventure, and then Ernest finished his coffee with a gulp and sprang up.

"So long! See you tonight, folks," he called after him. "Nine o'clock's pretty damned early to be at the office, when a fellow works nights, too. I don't care much about this business life."

Joe scanned his morning paper. He waited until he saw Ernest racing up the street towards the subway, then he turned towards me.

"Listen, Jackie," he said. "I'm going tomorrow morning. I'll be back sometime. The bullet's not made that can get me. I want to come back, and I feel that I'm going to. I like you as much as I ever liked a girl. You don't belong in this atmosphere. You're just kidding yourself along."

He knew this one didn't go very well. He laughed, and dodged as if I were going to throw a roll at him.

I suppose it's foolish to talk of love—now," he continued. "We haven't known each other long enough for that, but I could learn to love you, and you could learn to love me—maybe. Remember, I'll be thinking of you over there. I'll know that you've got too much sense to take a step of the sort we discussed last night."

YOU see, Jackie, you've been fed up, I'm afraid, on a lot of bunk. The French are a brave race. It's not all pleasure or abandon in France. It's not much pleasure for those poilus who are holding back the Germans at Verdun. Paris is a good deal like your New York. It's the visitors who do most of the hell-raising. They've got the money and the spare time, and wherever mobs of idle people gather together there's going to be celebrations, whether it's in Paris, or Kansas City, or Brooklyn.

France is full of virtuous girls. Some of the French girls in the occupied zone who have been unfortunate have killed themselves—killed themselves, Jackie, for an experience that you talk about going into voluntarily. The French built Eiffel Tower, and started to build the Panama Canal. They are not a decadent race. They are a race of mothers and fathers—of honest, hard-working peasants and business-like shop-people. Don't think of decadence in connection with the French, Jackie. Think of that unconquerable spirit, and vow that you'll never be conquered, by yourself or anyone else. I've been reading the war news this morning, as usual. I've found something—a text for you. Look at this!"

Joe was never stagey, but that morning his voice was resonant. He pointed to a big, black headline.

"THEY SHALL NOT PASS!" SAYS GENERAL PETAIN

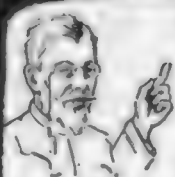
"They shall not pass!"

The line fairly shrieked at me. It seemed to raise me from a silly girl to the level of a sensible American woman. "They shall not pass!"

Joe was looking at me with those unflinching dark-blue eyes.

"I know that no enemy shall pass those gates of virtue which your parents have guarded so carefully, Jackie," he said, softly. "I know you are a good girl at

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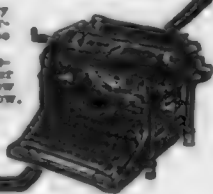
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heart. You are at an age where the artificial often seems dearer than the real, but you'll change some day. I want the same honest little Jackie to be waiting for me—when I come back."

He reached over and took my hand. I burst into tears.

I left the boarding-house when my week was up. Ernest telephoned me a couple of times, but I never saw him. I called him up from time to time, also, but only after months had passed, to ask him about Joe Carlin. I received two letters from Joe, then heard no more from him.

The war lasted and lasted. One day I called Ernest's number, and there was a new tenant in The Crow's Nest. Ernest was at Camp Upton, Long Island, drilling to go across.

I started to work; I wanted to do my bit. I was employed in a Long Island City factory which manufactured gas-masks. I would have worked for nothing, but the pay was very good, and I started to save money. I continued to take two music lessons a week, but I knew by this time that the life of an artist was not for me. I learned to play well, but there was no genius.

Poor Joe never came back to peddle those stories about heavy shell-fire. The bullet that would get him was made, after all.

Joe could never play the hero role—but he will always live in my memory as a real hero. He was shot down by a Flying Circus over the German lines. He did his little bit for the world—and for a silly girl with an imaginary "little bit of French" in her.

THOSE letters from Ernest seemed to reflect his progress along the path of manhood. At first they were full of complaints about life in the army, and loaded with passages about the wild times he expected to have in Paris when he had a furlough of a few days. Then the third letter seemed to be from a different person. Ernest seemed to realize now that he was a cog in a grim machine; that if he had to die he could not do so in a more glorious way than fighting for his country; that if he had his life to live over again it would be in different surroundings and with loftier ambitions. It was after the Armistice when I received his fourth and final letter, in which he pleaded with me to stay in New York until he returned and not go back to Kansas as I had planned. He had something very important to tell me, he said, and he didn't want to chase 'way out to Kansas to tell me, for he had but little money and would have to get to work as soon as he was mustered out. His old job in the advertising agency was open, he told me.

My heart leaped within me when I received a telegram from Tenally, New Jersey, one day. Ernest had not been discharged as yet, but he had leave for three days, and was starting at once for New York. A little later there was a ring at my apartment door. Somehow, I knew that it was Ernest.

"Frenchy!" breathed Ernest.
"Just Jacqueline," I said. "Frenchy died, Ernest."

"The army has made a man of me, Jacqueline. It was a hard grind, but it was worth it, just to come home—to—I found out a good many things in France. It was my first trip. You remember, I told you in one of my letters of how I had lied to you about living in Paris. I never did, and I never want to. This is my country, and this is where I want to live, and work, and die. I came down on the train with the chaplain of our outfit Jacqueline. He lives on Eighty-third Street—and—it really isn't very far—"

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What Becomes of the Follies Girls

[Continued from page 49]

as rich as all get-out—makes the parts for the Blank automobiles. And a grand fellow! He'll inherit millions!"

For a week the dressing rooms buzzed with gossip about the lucky Geraldine, not lacking in "catty" reminders of the famous show beauty's past. Then one night—

"My heavens!" It was Patsy who brought the breath-taking news. "Geraldine's back in the show! I saw her go into her dressing room!"

True enough. Geraldine was back. If any girl should have landed a millionaire on the basis of her beauty, it was Geraldine.

Geraldine promptly brought suit for divorce. The press agent of the show gave out her story. Instead of being the son of a millionaire, her husband was only the cousin of the son of a millionaire, who had paid his tuition at college. Instead of being heir to millions, he didn't have a nickel.

Every night I heard stories of girls, in our own show and others, who were given pearl necklaces of fabulous value, gowns, motor cars, apartments, even houses.

Among the girls wedded during my first season was Adeline, feature dancer, and a real nice girl, who never played around. As things happen, Adeline and I were invited one night to a supper party at the Ritz-Carlton. Our table was profusely decorated with flowers; the whole affair was bewildering. As souvenirs there were jewelled brooches. It was whispered around the table they were worth five-hundred apiece. Our host, a boisterous and bragging young man, ignored the girl he had brought with him and concentrated his attentions upon Adeline. My supper partner, who had a face so red he looked like a huge lobster in dinner clothes, volubly impressed me that his friend was the son of a multi-millionaire manufacturer in Pittsburg. Adeline wore an engagement ring the next day; within a week she was married.

THE newspapers gave liberal space to the press agent's story of the dancer's marriage to the son of the millionaire. But the nigger bobbed out of the woodpile when the newspapers, next day, published a dispatch from Pittsburg indentifying the father of our former host at the Ritz as a junk dealer—well-to-do, but merely a junk dealer at that.

In the next two years I worked in several productions. I saw many of my girl friends marry. But to millionaires? I don't believe I saw a single rich "catch" draw his rheumatic legs to the altar—nor the sons of bloated capitalists.

Well, judging by all I've told, one would probably think I should have been too wise to "fall" myself. Yes, I should have been "wise"; I should have known better. I knew that of all the marriages of chorus girls of my acquaintance up to this time, numbering, I should say, about fifty, only three had turned out happily. And not a single girl had married a *bona fide* millionaire! But we seldom, if ever, profit by others' experiences. We think of our cases as different. It's woman's nature to look for love. Whatever was the sad lot of other girls, I never gave up the expectation I brought with me to New York from the small country town. Someday, I always believed, a romantic lover was going to rise up over my horizon and make wild and passionate love to me. And isn't it the secret desire of every young woman? I'd lost a lot of my illusions—but not that illusion. I came to realize I didn't have the personality or voice to fit me for a stellar

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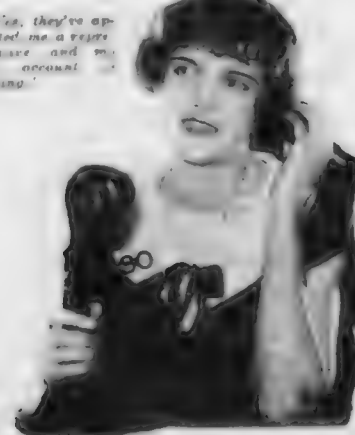
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role. I knew I'd never be a star. I came to realize there wasn't any future in chorus work.

Capable in my own mediocre way, I knew I could get along for a number of years—for five years, maybe ten. At nineteen I was in the class most in demand. At twenty-nine I knew I should be passé. And then? I should have found the hero of my dreams! Matrimony—and maybe millions.

But there were times when, weary and disillusioned, I thought wistfully of the simple, clean, contentedly happy lives of the folks back home and—curious, you may think—of Ralph. Yes—of Ralph.

MY YOUNGER sister and I kept up an occasional correspondence. From her I learned Ralph's uncle had died and had bequeathed him a controlling interest in the foundry. Why had he never written to me? Why hadn't he come to New York to seek me out? That he hadn't, filled me with a deep resentment. That he might have believed I went off to live with Rennie Sheridan, made me angrier. Ralph knew where I was. The local weekly in my home town had printed comments on my stage career in New York. The fact that Ralph hadn't come dashing to the big town to seek me out provoked a deep irritation when I permitted myself to think of it. Well, I'd never go back to Ralph and eat humble pie. If the opportunity ever came I'd make a brilliant marriage, and then, when I'd married my millionaire I'd go back home and show them all—including him.

And then came my marriage! Which I didn't go back home to cast in their teeth. This is how it happened:

"Say, there's a swell affair on tonight, and they asked me to bring one girl to fill out. Want to go?" Fern Lawcett dashed into my dressing room as I was changing my practice bloomers for street clothes. Fern and I had struck up a very close friendship, because she possessed a sincerity of character unusual among the girls. Fern had married a man whom she believed to be rich but whom she had to support. When she found he was going with other women, Fern parted from her handsome hubby. Declaring she'd never "fall" again, Fern said she'd pass up love for lucre anytime.

"What kind of a party's on tonight?" I asked, not being keen about boot-leg liquor parties.

"Some awful nice young fellows from out of town. One was a full-back at Yale. And rich as sin!"

Tired from rehearsals, I wasn't tempted by a night out after the evening's performance. I hesitated.

"Oh, come on! Who knows you may meet some one you'll like!"

"All right, I'll go," I agreed listlessly.

When Fern and I came from the stage exit that night, four youths leaped from a Rolls-Royce at the curb. From the moment introductions were made I had eyes and ears for no one except Jack Thurston. As it so happened, he was the unattached member of the party; in the car were two other girls. Three of the boys were from Pittsburg; all had been chums at Yale, and from what I gathered, Jack was acting as a sort of pilot during the visit of the three to New York. An elaborate supper had been arranged at a popular restaurant. We began with cocktails—innumerable cocktails. We had champagne—unlimited champagne.

"You've certainly done well, Jack, old dear," cried one of the boys. "You sure know the ropes, and for the rest of this trip we're in your hands."

Jack was six feet in his shoes, broad-shouldered, slim-waisted, features perfect, with jet black hair of slickly polished

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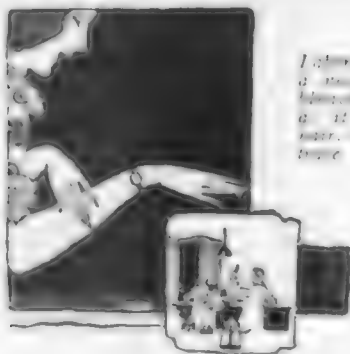
I am giving you the secret I found out in Paris and which is the most marvelous discovery ever made to easily and safely take off fat. I suffered for years with all the troubles well known to fat people—time after time—I deprived myself from all pleasures—bathing—dancing—riding or golfing because of my ridiculously fat figure. I turned down parties and friends to avoid the dreaded "here comes fatty" until one day, after I tried everything known to reduce and failed, I hit upon the secret with which I made myself over.

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lustre, and dark eyes that brought a feeling of faintness upon me

I fell. And I fell hard. As I said, girls never will learn! All women are fools in love. Did I ever suspect Jack? Do we ever suspect the man we fall in love with? And I did fall in love with Jack. My heart went away with my head. I took every word he told me for gospel-truth. Funny, isn't it? But it's true. Does anything count with a woman when she falls in love? She may be sophisticated and wise to everything and everybody, but nothing helps her when it comes to herself.

NOW to be quite just to Jack, he also "fell" for me. That, in fairness to him, may explain what he did. It was a mutual infatuation. After our first meeting he made an appointment for the next night. We went to a cabaret. We danced. He danced wonderfully. I was literally head and heels in love. At last, I felt, he had come to me—the prince charming of my Cinderella dreams! He met all the requirements. He was handsome; he was rich. Not that the riches he told me about mattered much: I'd have married him then if he hadn't had a penny.

But he did give me a strong line of talk. And I swallowed it. With all my wisdom I was a fool when it came to Jack. Did I think he was in a class with the "birds" other girls had married. I guess every girl thinks she is the exception when the "ultimate male" comes into her life. Jack told me his father was in the tobacco business some place or other. Rich; yes, a millionaire. Father off on a cruise in his yacht. Mother at Palm Beach. Jack was an only son. He had to humor the old man. Old man tight on cash, stern and "eccentric." Of course, all of Jack's friends were wealthy. He'd spent the summer at Newport. And he ran swell cars. He told me a lot of these things one day at luncheon at the Plaza. I gasped when he gave the head waiter a two dollar tip. He took me out in a big car—his car.

Three days of hurricane wooing! And then I wore his engagement ring.

I believed myself the happiest girl in the world. What if the romances of so many others had burst! I, at least, had found my hero!

"Why let's wait to get married?" His murmurous voice was like a caress. "Just for the present I don't think I better let the family know. Break it to them gently, see? And you better not tell your friend Fern; she might peep and it'd get out through the fellows. Little sweetheart, I just can't wait till I can call you all my own—"

AND folded in his arms. I was just as wildly anxious as he was. Four days after we met we went down to the Municipal Building and were married by the city clerk in the chapel on the third floor.

Where would we go on our honeymoon? "I'd love a trip to Europe," I sighed. "Or maybe Florida?"

His brow puckered. Well, maybe a trip abroad could be arranged later. But wouldn't a trip to Boston do? We could go by boat. I suggested we motor in his car. No; the car was laid up for repairs. He was sure we'd both more enjoy the trip by water.

I had nothing to complain of our three days in Boston. As a bridegroom, Jack was a perfect lover. Had he been trained in some secret crafts of love-making he could not have wooed more perfectly.

Toward noon of the fourth day of our honeymoon Jack returned to our suite with a worried hang-dog look on his face.

"Listen, hon," he began, "how'd you like to take the midnight train back to New York?"

"So soon?" in a dismayed voice, rushing

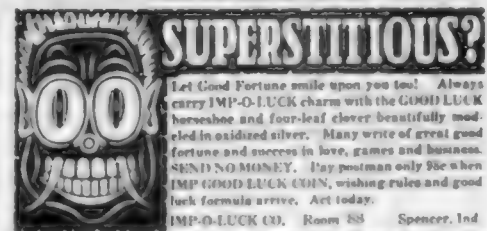


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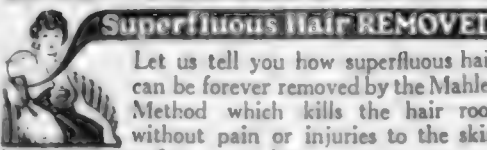
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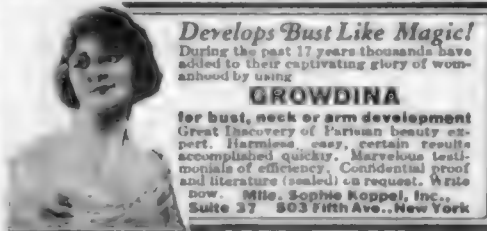


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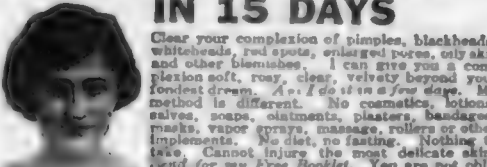
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up to him. "You're tired—already?" Tears misted my eyes. "Oh", he exploded, averting his face, "I'd like to stay on here forever. I—I—well, there's something I've got to tell you, and I might as well tell you now as later. I've just asked them downstairs about their rates, and—and—I'm about at the end of my roll."

"At the end of your roll?" I repeated, dazed.

"I don't have any dough. I thought maybe you were a gold digger and wouldn't hitch up with me unless you thought I had the money-bags. Guess I was just clean dippy about you, but I had to win you some way. Most of you girls don't care for a guy unless he's got a wad. I intended to fess up. I thought you'd forgive me—when you knew how much I cared for you. Oh, I—I do love you. And I'll play on the level from now on. Can't we go back to New York and live in your apartment till I get on my feet? You—you can get back your job in the show, can't you?"

I, myself, paid the hotel bill. I paid the railroad fare on our return from the honeymoon.

And it was a far from happy bride who came back to New York to beg for a job she had given up for a fly-by-night plunge into matrimony and "millions". It was not the fact that Jack wasn't a millionaire's son that hit me so hard. It was that he had so blithely deceived me.

Well, as the deception was to win me, I didn't drop him for that. We came back to New York. I got a job. Jack admitted certain things. Very hazy and mysterious, from what he told me, I gathered that he had been at Yale and had played in the football team. There he had met the Pittsburg boys at whose supper I had met him. The car he had sported as his own was their car. They had loaned him money. He had engineered their entertainments in New York, picking up girls for them. They had paid his bills. Meeting me, he had "fallen hard", so he manufactured the fictioned millions in order to win me. He had hurried our wedding for fear he'd lose me if I discovered his were merely the borrowed feathers of a gay and brilliant bird.

Work? Oh, he'd done some extra work in pictures, he said. He was quite indefinite about work. But some director or other had promised him a job.

WE LIVED together for two weeks. While he continued to exercise a certain fascination, I just couldn't feel the same toward him. A tiny lump of hurt always rose in my throat when I thought of how he had deceived me. And when he made his most vehement protestations of love, I couldn't help feeling—just couldn't—a troubling suspicion within me.

One night he didn't call at the stage exit for me. All night I sat up waiting. He didn't come home. When he did arrive, the next afternoon, he was pleadingly apologetic. He showed all the signs of a terrible "hang-over."

"Say, kid, are you goin' to waste any sob-stuff on that bird?" Fern Fawcett put her arm around me when I confided my troubles to her. "I didn't want to butt in on your affairs, but if you want me to I'll put you wise. Them Pittsburg fellows he went around with told me. Why, he worked them to fare-you-well. Horned a car from one, and touched all the others. Don't you know he's just a professional who hires himself out as dance partner to unaccompanied women? This old burg's filled with lounge-lizards just like him. Why, he was at that party when old Mrs. ———, she mentioned the name of a woman who had figured in recent newspaper reports—'was robbed of her glitters. And don't you know where he hangs out?'"



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There was no question in my mind he had believed himself in love with me. But did he believe himself enamoured with these women with whom he danced and gave all outward demonstrations—for a price?

FERN wormed the confirmation of my suspicions from the head-waiter. Oh, yes, he was a popular partner with the ladies. Many took private lessons from him. The management gave him a room upstairs. Twenty-five dollars an hour was the price for a dancing lesson.

"Tell him," I said, trying to subdue the agitation within me, "there's a lady here wants to see him. Maybe I—I'm in need of a lesson."

I saw him rise from the table where he had been sitting with his bulgy and over-dressed companion. I noted the supercilious and rather disdainful expression on his face as he followed the waiter amid the tables. He was almost upon us before he spied me. The sallow olive of his face went almost green. Then a livid anger convulsed his features.

"W-w-what the hell—" he began as he flopped into a chair. "What do you mean, following me here?"

"Oh," with an airy toss of my head, "I thought maybe I might arrange for a lesson! But—I—guess I couldn't meet your price—with all the—the—competition."

His face was a study in mingled rage and dismay. "Say, now—now—cut that out—listen to me—"

I rose, not quite steady, perhaps. For I had loved him and when he caught me and told Fern he would bring me home I nodded to her that it was all right.

She rose to go as he guided me into a private dining room, and I had an impression that another man was close behind us.

I am a little hazy about the next few moments. Jack gave me a drink that was much too stiff, and the next I knew he was talking to the man who followed us.

They apparently thought I had fainted, and the man said, "I'll take her."

Those words sobered me, or brought me back to life but I lay still. Jack spoke quickly:

"Five hundred cash and get her out of town quick. That's all."

But he spoke too loud. There was a knock at the door and I screamed. In an instant the two men were dragging me toward the window, but I heard Fern's high-pitched voice outside the door. Then I fainted again.

When I came to, I was back in bed in my own room. Fern never told me how I got there and I never asked. But that was the end of my romance. I never saw Jack again and I believe he must have fled New York.

With me it was over. I might have continued in a way to love Jack, even after his deceiving me about his mythical fortune. I understood his point of view that perhaps a chorus girl wouldn't marry a man without money, and that, infatuated with me as he was, he'd lied to me in order to win me. A woman may forgive deceit, if a man loves her so much that he camouflages in order to win her love. But Jack's last act was quite another matter. No woman can forgive treachery. Whatever feelings I had for Jack were blasted when I learned

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Could you ask more while introducing line establishing a permanent business for yourself? Another plan calls for no deliveries—no investment—no delays. You bank immediate profits. Also a winning plan, a premium to each sale. Write today for illustrated circulars explaining our unique plans. Act NOW.
E. M. DAVIS CO. Dept. 7630 CHICAGO

what he was. Whatever lingering faith I had was utterly shattered. A professional parasite, a man who would flatter and deceive women for money, what could I have but contempt for him?

I sublet my apartment and moved in with Fern.

About a year ago I brought action for divorce, and three weeks ago the decree was granted.

I know stage life for what it is. For girls who have genuine talent and a sincere ambition to achieve legitimate success, it is maybe the way to fame and fortune. But not so for the girls who go in for cocktails, cigarettes and chappies, and who look to the footlights as a show window for the display of their physical charms. It is not the fault of producers that so many girls enter the ranks of the chorus with the idea solely of selling their beauty. Most producers prohibit flirtations at the theatre and in every way try to discourage the girls from leading a gay life. It tells in their looks and it is seen in their work. Unless a girl possesses inherent ability, there is no future in a stage career. Every year the choruses are replenished with new recruits. Two years, three, or five. Then most are "done." And where do they go, these girls? What becomes of them?

Almost every night on Broadway, near the theatre where I am playing, hovers an old bedraggled woman with stringy hair, wearing rags and a man's old shoes. Her face, ravaged by drink or drugs, is grimy. Her voice gives you the shudders. Sometimes she tries to peddle discarded evening newspapers that she picks up in the streets.

In her day this withered crone was the toast of Broadway. I wonder what she thinks, if she ever does think, when her befuddled memory staggers back to her girlhood, before the white lights lured her, and when some country boy perhaps took her riding amid wheat-grown fields in a buggy and maybe offered her the treasure of a simple heart, an honest love.

Oh, I'm glad I've had my experience. And when I think of the man I married; the kind so many of us fall for; the smooth-haired, smooth-tongued dandies of the city; the male flirts and "sheiks" who haunt hotel lounges and cabarets; the fake millionaires; and suave, smartly groomed professional dancers and parasites of rich women, I always think of Ralph.

As always—secretly—I thought of Ralph! Dear, good, simple-hearted Ralph! Unromantic, and immersed in his casting business, his Rotary club, and the reform of local politics; stolid, crude in his manner, but dependable, sincere, with a heart true as gold.

Last week I got a letter from my younger sister. "Ralph called around at the house the other evening," she wrote, "the first time he'd been here since you left town. I think he's still got a soft spot for you. He said he'd read a notice of your divorce in the papers and wondered if you weren't ever coming back home."

GOING back home? I'm fed up on the chorus where I'm good for a salary only so long as my looks will last. I'm fed up on the chitter-chatter of the dressing rooms, of the meetings of girls with their "millionaires" and quarrels over beaux, and the gossip and scandal, and the shallowness and falsity of it all. Against the hard white glare of Broadway and the blazing incandescent lobbies of theatres, I have a vision, in contrast, of the little town whence I came: its streets cleanly blanketed with a fall of snow, and on the crisp winter nights a-sparkle with the gleaming window lights of happy little homes... The gleaming windows of happy little homes!

Yes, I am going back. And who knows but that my life may still be ahead of me?

Slenderize your figure to ideal proportions

Dr. Folts soap is the up-to-date way to reduce arms, legs, hips, double chin.



Why should you turn to diets, exercise or drugs—now that a positive and ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS EXTERNAL way to melt excess fat from any part of the body is offered you? To quickly get ideal slender lines all you need to do is to wash every night from five to ten minutes the parts you wish to reduce with a good lather of DR. FOLTS SOAP.

This soap as soon as applied is absorbed by the tissues and suppresses excessive fat without any possible chance of harming the most delicate skin. It has been found ideal to get rid of double chins because the skin is not left flabby or wrinkled after the reducing—fat men and women are now using this wonderful soap with amazing results—reductions of 15 to 20 inches in hips are of common occurrence every day.

Try it yourself—go to any good drug or department store—get DR. FOLTS SOAP (beware of cheap imitations). If your druggist is out of it he can get it from his wholesaler or you can send a check or money order direct to the Scientific Research Laboratory, 350 W. 31st St., Dept. 88, N. Y. C. DR. FOLTS SOAP sells for 50c a cake, or 3 for \$1.20.

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Radio Association of America
4513 Ravenswood Ave., Dept. S-8 Chicago

Abolish the Truss Forever

Do Away With Steel and Rubber Bands That Chafe and Pinch

You know by your own experience the truss is a mere makeshift—a false prop against a collapsing wall—and that it is undermining your health. Why, then, continue to wear it? The binding and pressure prevent proper blood circulation, thus robbing the weakened muscles of the nourishment which they must have if you expect them to regain their normal strength and elasticity.

The Plapao-Pads Are Different

STUART'S PLAPAO-PADS are entirely different from the device called the truss in the following respects:

First—The primary and most important object of the PLAPAO-PAD is to keep constantly applied to the relaxed muscles the medication called Plapao, which is contractive in nature, and taken together with the ingredients in the medicated mass, is intended to increase the circulation of the blood, thus revivifying the muscles and restoring them to their normal strength and elasticity. Then, and not until then, can you expect the rupture to disappear.

Second—Being made of self-adhesive purposely to prevent the pad from shifting, they have therefore proven to be an important adjunct in retaining rupture that cannot be held by a truss. There is no metal about the PLAPAO-PADS—no straps, buckles or springs attached. No "digging in" or grinding pressure. They are soft as velvet—Flexible—Easy to apply—Inexpensive. Continuous day and night treatment at home. No delay from work.

UPON THEIR OATH

Hundreds of people, old and young, have gone before an officer qualified to acknowledge oaths, and swore that the PLAPAO-PADS cured their rupture—some of them most aggravated cases; and of long standing.

W. Ambrose, Sheffield, Alabama, declares under oath:

I would not take one thousand dollars for every dollar I paid you for your Plapao-Pads. Your system is certainly wonderful, considering that rupture can be cured at my age—sixty years. I recommend your PLAPAO-PADS to everyone who is ruptured.

Geo. W. Weldin, Wilmington, Delaware, states under oath:

Your treatment cured me of a bad scrotal rupture, with which I was

troubled for ten years. I began to improve the very first day—the effect was really magical. I am eighty years old.

Guy O. Parks, Mountsville, W. Va., declares under oath:

I cannot express my thankfulness to you for the wonderful benefit I received by using your PLAPAO-PADS. I am entirely cured by one treatment.

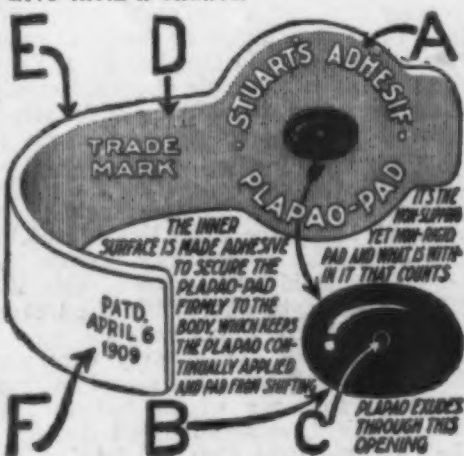
M. R. Newton, Hornell, N. Y., declares under oath:

I used all sorts of appliances for my rupture, having been afflicted for a number of years. Nothing helped till I used your PLAPAO-PADS. I cannot thank you enough for your service.

H. J. Wurth, New York Mills, N. Y., states:

I am completely cured by one series of your PLAPAO-PADS. I could not force my rupture down now even if I wanted to.

These are only a few of the hundreds of enthusiastic letters we have received from those cured by the PLAPAO-PADS. It is reasonable that they should do the same for you. Give them a chance.



The Plapao-Pad Explained

The principle upon which the PLAPAO-PAD works can be easily figured out by noting the illustration above, and reading the following explanation:

The PLAPAO-PAD is made of a strong, flexible material "E" which is designed to conform to the movements of the body, and be perfectly comfortable to wear. The inside surface "D" is adhesive similar to an adhesive plaster, to prevent the pad from shifting and getting out of place.

"A" is the enlarged end of the PLAPAO-PAD, which overlies the atrophied and weakened muscles to keep them from giving away further. "E" is the Pad, to be applied in such a way that it blocks up the hernial orifice, and tends to prevent the contents of the abdomen from protruding. Within the Pad is a reservoir, in which is placed a wonderful absorbent, astringent medication. When warmed by the heat of the body it becomes soluble and escapes through the small opening marked "C" and is absorbed through the pores of the skin to strengthen the weakened muscles and effect a closure of the openings. "F" is the long end of the PLAPAO-PAD, which is to be plastered over the hip-bone to give solidity.

Brings About These Benefits

When the PLAPAO-PAD is successfully applied these wonderful benefits quickly follow:

- The ruptured parts are sustained and held together.
- The weak muscles recover their elasticity and strength.
- The unsightly, painful and dangerous protrusions disappear.
- That horrible "dragging down" sensation is banished, never to return.
- You recover the vigor, vitality, energy and strength you have lost.
- You look better, you feel better and you are better in every way. Every one remarks upon your improved appearance. And relieved from the pain and discomfort of the rupture, and your dread of the consequences, your spirits rise, your health improves, you once more are able to enjoy life without fear of trouble.

Common Sense Way

Weakened muscular tissue—that's the real cause of rupture and the logical common-sense thing to do is to restore the lost elasticity, tone and contractile strength to the weakened muscles. Close the hernia opening as nature intended so the rupture CAN'T come down.

Another striking feature of the PLAPAO-PAD treatment is the comparatively short time it takes to get the results. This is because the action is continuous—night and day, throughout the whole of the 24 hours.

MAKE THIS TEST AT OUR EXPENSE

We want you to make a personal test of this remarkable scientific treatment at our expense, and the more severe the test, the better we will like it. The test costs you nothing. We take all risk. Simply return the coupon.

FREE TO THE RUPTURED FREE

10,000 Rupture Sufferers to get TRIAL PLAPAO and Illustrated Book on RUPTURE, Absolutely FREE

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Plapao Laboratories, Inc.,
235 Stuart Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Gentlemen: Please send me, by return mail, trial of PLAPAO and your 48 page illustrated book on rupture. It is understood that this is absolutely free and does not obligate me in any way.

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Address.....



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